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Forgiveness has many faces

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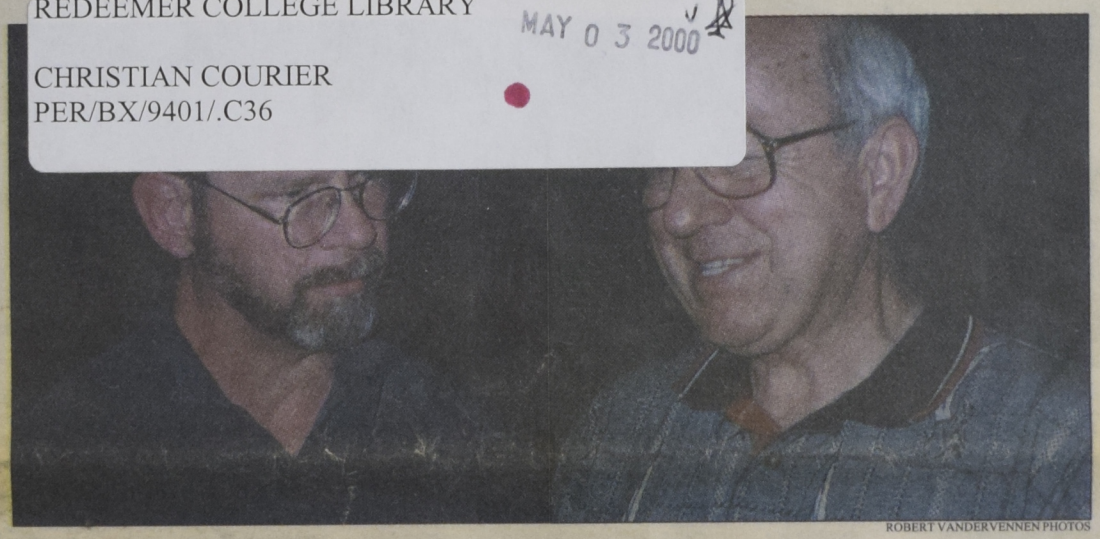
Robert VanderVennen

PHOENIX, Arizona — Forgiveness has as many faces as there are different people and circumstances requiring forgiveness, says Bud Welch, whose adult daughter was killed in the terrible Oklahoma City bombing of nearly five years ago. It is very different for James Hamm, who has needed to forgive himself and take responsibility for killing a man in cold blood in 1974.

Welch and Hamm shared the speaker's platform on a recent Wednesday night at the Episcopal (Anglican) Cathedral in Phoenix. Their appearance was sponsored by an Arizona group that opposes the death penalty.



ROBERT VANDERVENNEN PHOTOS

James Hamm (left) and Bud Welch have had to deal with different, difficult aspects of forgiveness.

Craving revenge

Welch was raised on a dairy farm in Oklahoma and for years ran a Texaco gas station. As devout Catholics, he and his only daughter Julie always opposed the death penalty. But for a few weeks after the bombing, he wanted the bombers Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols to be "fried," even without a trial.

Welch began smoking heavily and drinking to excess. A moment of light came when he asked himself, "How's it going to help me once they're tried, convicted and executed?" He saw that it was rage and revenge that made him want them to be executed, but that he himself would not be helped by it.

Welch now spends his time travelling the United States speaking on forgiveness and against the death penalty. A year and a half ago he was speaking in Buffalo and decided to visit William McVeigh, Timothy's father, who lives in that area. He went to McVeigh's home, and it was a tense meeting for both of them. But they broke through that, cried together, and recognized that the bombing and its effects would be a central part of their lives forever.

Welch realized that while he goes around the country talking lovingly about his daughter, McVeigh probably doesn't want to admit to anyone that he has a son.

Self-forgiveness for a murderer

Hamm killed a man when a drug deal went bad. It was his first offense, committed under the influence of drugs during a time he describes as temporary insanity. But he felt terrible about it, accepted responsibility for what he had done, pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to life in prison.

In prison he had terrible nightmares of the crime over and over, which went on for months. Something had to happen, and there were no therapists in prison to help him. All his life he had turned away from difficult matters, and in prison everyone evades responsibility. But now he decided that his only help could come from

See **FORGIVENESS** *page 2...*

The rich must free the poor from debt, activists say

WASHINGTON (Religion Today) — Several thousand people clasped hands to form a human chain around the U.S. Capitol April 9, symbolizing the chains of debt that shackle poor countries.

The Jubilee 2000 logo.

Poor nations can barely pay interest on their loans and if they make the payments, there is little left for health care and education for their people, protesters at the rally said. They asked the world's wealthy nations, which have lent hundreds of billions of dollars to poor nations, to write off the debts so poor people can live better lives.

Joyful proclamation

A four-hour rally was led by Jubilee 2000, an American coalition of religious groups and labor and social-justice activists. The idea for debt reform is inspired by the Old Testament book of Leviticus, which describes a Year of Jubilee every 50 years during which people make a fresh start by freeing slaves and canceling debts.

"This is a joyful proclamation of a biblical principle. It's not violent at all," George Aros of Sonora, Ky., told *The Washington Post*. He traveled to Washington with about 50 other church members who call themselves Kentucky Jubilarians.

Many demonstrators spent the morning in worship at several churches before going to the rally, the *Post* said. About 250 people attended a service at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church led by Marian McClure, director of the Presbyterian Church's Worldwide Ministries Division. She read Leviticus 25:8-17 on the Year of Jubilee, and said that Christianity is marked by "grace that forgives sins and debts, a grace which is about letting go and not holding it over someone when you have the power to."

Smaller turnout than expected

Rally organizers had hoped the event would attract as many as 10,000 people, but only about 3,000 or 4,000 turned out on Washington's mall on an unusually cold day, news reports said.

The rally was aimed at persuading Congress to approve a budget request for $210 million to pay U.S. obligations this year under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative, a worldwide effort to cut the debts of the world's poorest nations. Congress approved $123 million last year as the first installment to meet President Clinton's pledge to forgive all the debts owed to the United States by poor nations. If Congress fails to approve the $210 million, HIPC organizers said, other nations might withhold their funding, putting the entire plan at risk.

World Bank President James Wolfensohn supports a certain amount of debt relief, but rejects full cancellation of debt as unrealistic. "If you have a society based on debt forgiveness," Wolfensohn said in February, "who's going to invest in debt anymore?"

Among those speaking at the rally were religious leaders from a variety of faiths and John Sweeney, president of the AFL-CIO labor union. The debt burden in poor

See **DEBT BURDEN** *page 2...*

News

Forgiveness 'a softening force which opened doors'

... *continued from page 1*

facing his crime and drug addiction. This was terribly painful but was the start of finding peace.

Hamm began to realize that he was experiencing an increasing degree of self-forgiveness. That took away much of his pain and bitterness. He found forgiveness to be a softening force which opened doors and gave him new options. He says he's still not completely forgiven himself.

A defining moment

Forgiveness fundamentally changes relationships. A defining moment came for him when his girlfriend left, after visiting him in prison, and he realized that if she were killed, he would never see her again. He then saw how a victim's family suffers, and he put himself in their place. He now wants to make the world better because the man he killed isn't able to.

While in prison Hamm earned a bachelor's degree from a university which brought courses into the prison. After 17 years in prison he was paroled and has now graduated from law school at Arizona State University and has passed the bar exams but is not yet able to be admitted to the bar.

Working for prison reform

Hamm and his wife, who is a judge in Arizona, have started an organization working for prison reform. He hopes to work for a doctor's degree and become a university teacher. He said that at first he favored private for-profit organizations taking over the running of prisons, believing that no one could do a worse job of running prisons than governments, but to his surprise he has now found that such agencies actually do a worse job.

When asked from the audience whether he sees forgiveness as having a religious centre, Hamm vigorously agreed. He said he has been attracted to Jungianism as the most religious of psychological systems, and to Taoism as the most psychological of religions. He found that the death of his old self led to spiritual rebirth.

Not many people want to think about how violent crime affects both the victims and the criminals. These two men want to help people deal with that, and they see the important biblical call to forgiveness as central to that.

Forgiveness

It is:
Moral, a response to an injustice
Merciful, a restraint from pursuing resentment or revenge
Paradoxical, a forgoing of resentment or revenge when actions deserve it
Beyond dutiful, a gift rather than an obligation
Giving up hope of a better past.

It is not:
Forgetting or denying the effects of the wrongdoing
Condoning what happened
Excusing the person from responsibility
Condemning with a sense of moral superiority
Seeking justice or compensation
Reconciliation, which is two parties coming together in mutual respect. It takes only one to forgive.
Sources: International Forgiveness Institute and the *Arizona Republic* newspaper.

Colombian evangelist forgives attacker

COLOMBIA (Religion Today) A man survived a massacre to eventually preach to one of his attackers. Alexander Puertas was riding to his job in Colombia three years ago when rebels stopped the bus and ordered everyone outside, the missions group OMS International said.

Bound and lying face down in a field, Puertas believed he was about to die, and told his attackers "Jesus loves you" so they would know they could be forgiven for their sins, he said. Puertas was shot in the head, and, as a rebel cut his neck with a machete, he said, he heard the Holy Spirit tell him, "You are going to live for the praise of my glory." Puertas feigned death until the attackers left, and was taken to a hospital.

Now, Puertas attends seminary and preaches in prisons about forgiveness through Christ. He is blind in one eye and has limited vision in the other, but he gives a testimony about God's sovereignty. "If God desires to communicate the message of the cross through my life, who am I to deny by what means he desires to do so?" he said.

Puertas recently gave his testimony at Bellavista Prison; "I forgave all who have done me this wrong," Puertas told the group. A rebel who participated in the attack attended the meeting.

Government forces and rebel groups are fighting across the country, and more than 35,000 Colombians have died violently in the last decade, OMS reported.

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Debt burden killing thousands, say Jubilee supporters

... *continued from page 1*

countries "is killing hundreds of thousands of children every year," Sweeney told the rally. "In Ethiopia, more than 100,000 children die every year from diarrhea" while its government spends "four times as much on debt payments as on its public budget for health care. That's why we can't wait until next year and that's why we are united and committed to the goal of debt relief now."

Foreign debt hurts U.S. workers, too, Sweeney said. "High debt levels force developing countries to lower labor standards and wages in order to attract corporate investment," he said. As a result, U.S. workers compete for jobs against low-wage earners.

Other speakers included Roman Catholic Archbishop Oscar Rodriguez of Honduras.

Gene Sperling, Clinton's economic adviser, read a letter from the president to the rally. "No nation on this Earth should be forced to choose between feeding and educating children or paying interest on excessive debt," Clinton said in his letter applauding the Jubilee 2000 effort. "No children, no matter where they are born, should be deprived of the opportunity to reach their full potential."

'Extraordinary grassroots effort'

Clinton praised "this extraordinary grassroots effort to reduce the debt of the world's most impoverished countries" and noted that most heavily indebted countries spend more on debt service than on health or education. "This is wrong," he wrote.

His words impacted many, particularly those who have visited developing countries, the *Post* said. "It just seems to me we need to forgive their debt so they can have something for life," said Bonnie Rochelle, of Phelps, N.Y., who worked in Nicaragua. "People can't even feed their families."

College students were among the most enthusiastic participants. Some wore red armbands. "Every left-oriented group has found common ground on this," Lauren Lastrapes of George Washington University said. Chris Clement of Howard University said he has become "increasingly angry at a world where there's a growing disparity between rich and poor."

The human chain was the first of several planned protests in Washington in April.

Demonstrators were planning a massive rally for April 16 in the park across from the White House. It was still in the future at the time of this writing. Organizers of that rally hoped to shut down meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Officials in Washington were preparing for violence, afraid of another Seattle riot.

Participants in Jubilee 2000 made it clear that their efforts were not linked to the more militant demonstrations expected afterward.

News Briefs

Evangelicals in Guatemala

GUATEMALA (Religion Today) — Evangelical Christians are changing Guatemala, a professed atheist told a group of visiting U.S. ministers. Evangelicals "are the best workers, make up the strongest families, save money, and contribute the most to the well-being of their country," the man, a journalist, told members of the Houston-based ministry Global Vision.

The American ministers were returning from a three-night evangelistic outreach to Coatepeque in February, Global Vision said. Evangelist Haje Andraus preached to more than 4,000 people, and 420 professed faith in Christ, the ministry said. Andraus also spoke at pastors' seminars, businessmen's luncheons, and women's meetings, where 60 people became Christians.

Religious leaders call for peace in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (ENI) — About 10,000 people, led by Christian leaders, have taken part in a peace rally in Jaffna, on Sri Lanka's northern peninsula, demanding an immediate end to the country's 17 years of ethnic conflict. The rally on March 25, described as the largest in recent history, was addressed by prominent Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim religious leaders, as well as the Roman Catholic bishop of Jaffna, Thomas Savundaranayagam. According to a statement addressed to Sri Lanka's president, Chandrika Kumaratunga, which was read out at the end of the rally, "the 17-year-old ravaging of our land has now reached monstrous proportions." The ethnic conflict has led to "uncivilized acts of shame: rape, torture, arbitrary arrest, disappearance and extra-judicial killing to a scale too much for a small nation," the statement said.

Christians under investigation in Uganda

UGANDA — Uganda is investigating Christians after the mass suicides and murders in a cult group. Uganda's Parliament called for closer scrutiny of religious sects and more restrictions on non-governmental organizations, *Newsroom* said. Police said they are investigating churches whose members call themselves "born-again" Christians, a description most closely linked to Pentecostal churches in the country. "We suspect that some Pentecostal churches are involved in cult activities," a policeman said.

More than 80 pastors met March 27 to discuss the tragedy and to denounce the Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God, *Newsroom* said. They threatened to sue the government for harassment and infringement of their rights. "God gave us the right to worship," one pastor said. "If they close the churches, we will have gone back to the days of dictator Idi Amin." The pastors said they will work with the government on an official commission on religious groups.

Hundreds of cult members died in the blaze that destroyed the cult's compound. It was the worst mass suicide in the nation's history, and hundreds of others have been found in separate graves, apparently murdered, police said.

Religious freedom in China: Chinese church leader

CHINA (Religion Today) — A Chinese church leader is denying that his government persecutes Christians. "On the whole, generally speaking, the policy is freedom," said Han Wenzao, president of the China Christian Council, which oversees the state-approved Protestant churches. Han is on a three-week visit to the United States and has been meeting with religious leaders, The Associated Press said.

Han disputed a U.S. State Department report that said religious persecution is on the rise in China. "I don't think that's the case," he said, noting that circumstances have changed a great deal since the Cultural Revolution of the late 1960s and 1970s when churches were closed and Bibles burned. "That period really was mass persecution," he said. More than 13,000 churches have reopened and 23 million Bibles have been printed since then, he said. "There is a church in China — young, weak, but growing."

Churches that are not approved by the government are persecuted, news reports say. Protestant and Catholic churches that refuse to join state-sanctioned religious bodies are raided, their leaders arrested, and their buildings closed, according to news reports. The U.S. State Department has called on the United Nations Human Rights Commission to rebuke China for its repression, including its "widespread denials of political, cultural, labor, and religious freedom."

EFC questions Canada's foreign policy actions in Sudan

MARKHAM, Ont. (EFC) — The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) is profoundly disappointed in Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy's lack of action on the issues surrounding Sudan.

The EFC is surprised that Axworthy did not raise the issues Sudan presents at United Nations Security Council meetings. These meetings presented a critical opportunity for Canada to ensure that the international community was aware of these issues and could consider taking measures that would ease the suffering taking place in Sudan. Canada had a great opportunity to raise this issue as it is currently chairing the UN Security Council.

MIKE PINDER

Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy

Strategic time is now

"There is no more strategic time to discuss and act upon the horrors currently being perpetrated in Sudan," comments Janet Epp Buckingham, Director of EFC's Religious Liberty Commission, "in violation of its own declaration of a cease fire only a few weeks ago, the Khartoum government bombed civilian targets in Southern Sudan including hospitals, churches and schools."

"Every day, our office receives e-mails from eye witnesses testifying to bombings, shelling and mass rape inflicted on the people of the Nuba Mountain region," says Epp Buckingham. "The reports show that new areas are being cleared of people for oil exploration, possibly by new Canadian oil interests."

In February, the EFC met with Axworthy to raise its concerns about Sudan and other situations of religious persecution taking place around the globe. At that time, the EFC was assured that Axworthy was committed to raising the issue of Sudan before the UN Security Council. The EFC has written letters to Cabinet Ministers and other members of Parliament appealing to the Canadian government to address the issue of religious persecution in Sudan.

The report filed by the Canadian government's fact-finding mission to Sudan earlier this year supported the need for the Canadian government to consider taking some form of action.

"The Harker Report clearly shows a link between Canadian oil development and the Khartoum government's war efforts," says Epp Buckingham. "This should be enough evidence for the Canadian government to take stronger action."

Oil company unconcerned

The EFC has also raised its concerns directly with the Chief Executive Officer of Talisman Energy, Dr. James Buckee. "Dr. Buckee argues that there is no one living in the oil field area," says Epp Buckingham, "but that is only because the area was cleared of people by the Khartoum government."

The EFC has grave concerns that the establishment of a Canadian diplomatic office in Khartoum sends the wrong message.

"This development indicates that Canada endorses the Khartoum government," argues Epp Buckingham. "When a government is perpetrating massive human rights abuses, it is not the time to establish stronger diplomatic relations."

The EFC calls on the Canadian government to act courageously to:

* stop the involvement of Canadian oil companies whose interests in Sudan are funding the war;
* use Canada's influence in the international community for sanctions against Sudan;
* reverse its decision to open a diplomatic office in Khartoum.

Suffering of Sudanese Christians intensifies

SUDAN (Religion Today) — Sudan is preparing a massive attack on a region inhabited by Christians. Eight divisions of government troops equipped with tanks and sophisticated weapons have massed in the town of Kadugli and are in place to attack strategic sites in the southeastern region of the Nuba Mountains, says International Christian Concern, a ministry that operates in the area. Christians and animists, who are the targets of a long holy war by Khartoum's Islamic regime, live in the area, ICC said.

Oil companies fueling war

If the government seizes control of the Nuba region, it can provide more security around its oil fields in the south, increasing their output and generating more revenue to wage war, the ministry said.

Investments by international oil companies are fueling the government's war, news reports say. Advocates of a boycott against companies that own a stake in the China National Petroleum Corp. say the firm drills and explores for oil in Sudan, reports said. Talisman Oil, a Canadian company, has been the target of a disinvestment campaign for its participation in a joint venture with Sudan's government-owned oil company.

Sudan has increased its attacks against civilian and non-military targets, news reports say. At least three hospitals run by Christian ministries in the south have been bombed, reports said. Paul Lindstrom, superintendent of Christian Liberty School system, said government forces recently bombed a CLS school in Sudan. Also, about 400 bombs were dropped on civilians in Equatoria province between January 1999 and January 2000, ICC said. Islamic forces have used chemical weapons against civilians, causing vomiting, miscarriages, burns, and headaches, ICC said, quoting reports from non-governmental organizations.

'Eerie silence'

There is an "eerie silence" from the international community as the north prepares its attack, ICC said. "Why does the militant-Muslim regime in Khartoum get help from their Muslim neighbors and yet our cries for help from fellow Christians around the world seem to fall on deaf ears?" a Sudanese pastor asked.

Editorial

Breaking curfew

Harry der Nederlanden

Our focus in this issue is on *discipline*, a word we often associate with curfews and punishments. It is, however, about *spiritual* discipline. We tend to associate discipline with the body, with limits and restrictions imposed on us from outside, while the spiritual deals with what is inner, spontaneous, ever fluid and unfixed. This is why Carroll Guen-Hart asks (page 13), Is it an oxymoron? Eric Schuringa uses it in the plural: there are many spiritual disciplines, some of which we've forgotten or ignored. He recommends that we reconsider some of them.

As I thought about disciplining our ever wayward, ever recalcitrant spirits, I thought about how easily they become technologies for self-improvement or ways to scourge ourselves. Yet, as Eric shows, this is precisely the opposite of what they intend. They are ways to bring Sabbath and Shalom into overly busy, overly goal-oriented lives. Their intent is to break us away from the sphere of the rules and schedules — and curfews — by which we order our lives to be responsible middle-class citizens.

The discipline of winter

For those of us who grew up in northern Alberta (or in any of our provinces, I imagine), winter was ice rinks and hockey. Walk a half mile in any direction on a winter night in our town and you'd spot the lights and hear the sounds of an outdoor rink. From some wafted the lilting tunes of popular songs as boys and girls circled the ice and one another trailing plumes of hot breath. Most rinks, however, reverberated with the crash of sticks and bodies and with the shrill of the referee's whistle. Hockey was the central discipline of winter.

There was hardly a guy in town who didn't belong to at least one team. If you couldn't afford shin pads, you folded a fat edition of the *Edmonton Journal* around your shins and held it in place with the rubber rings from your mother's canning jars.

Our church league was one of the toughest leagues around. And our roughest games were against the farm boys of Neerlandia. The drive north took at least an hour and a half in those days. By the time we arrived, we were already beaten. "There's no work in the fields in winter," we told one another, "so they've got all day to practice."

They didn't need that much practice. They outweighed us by 20 lbs. apiece; they out-skated us, out-checked us and manhandled us all over the ice. And we knew it was coming. To go up north was an exercise in self-humiliation. In hockey you become very goal-oriented, and we didn't get any.

Afterward, as we removed our equipment in the skating shack, it was quiet. All you heard was guys snorting mucus back up their numb noses, grunts over tight laces, and the thump of sticks hitting the floor.

Before we were halfway home, however, the humiliating loss was forgotten, and we were warriors again, whooping out excess adrenalin into the still, starry winter night. The trip home always took at least twice as long as the trip up.

Curfew was 12:30 a.m. You had wheedled out an extra half-hour because the game was out of town – in the boonies. (Of course, to the teams from Edmonton, *we* were in the boonies.)

Your friends drop you off a half block from home so the sound of car doors banging won't wake your parents. The house is dark. Good! Slowly, quietly, you open the door to the porch and carefully remove your boots and winter clothes. It's two hours past curfew.

Very slowly, carefully shifting your weight from one foot to the other to keep the floor from creaking, you steal down the hall like a burglar. The regular, noisy breathing from your parents' bedroom tells you you're in luck. They're both sound asleep.

As you begin to undress in your bedroom, you hear noises in the hall. It's mom. She has an uncanny sixth sense that wakes her up whenever you come in late. Quick as a gopher popping into his hole, you jump under the covers — still dressed — and yank them up over your shoulders. You lie very still.

Slowly your bedroom door opens and a sliver of light from the hallway probes your bed. You can almost hear her listening. So you breathe deeply, regularly, imitating the breathing you'd heard a few moments ago. Slowly, silently, the door closes again, and you hear her shuffle off back to bed.

The next morning at the breakfast table as she ladles out the oatmeal, mother says, "I didn't hear you come home last night. What time was it?"

You take a long, leisurely sip of milk. "Way late, mom," you answer, suddenly inspired. "I think it was 3, no, 4 a.m."

"Liar!" she says, stopping to cuff your ear, but you duck in time. (She always signals her punches.) "I checked your room about 2 a.m. and you were sound asleep."

You snigger. You'll tell her the truth. Not just now, though. Maybe in a year or two.

Curfews, you knew, were limits your parents set for your own good. They were part of a larger discipline they erected around you, a spiritual counterpart to the home they built to shelter you from the harsh winters and to contain your joined lives.

Sometimes, however, you chafed under such limits. They sometimes pinched and caused needless discomfort like skates you've outgrown.

Rules, everyone admits, are necessary to human life. They make civilization, prosperity, order and peace possible. Yet, there isn't a person alive with a dollop of spirit who hasn't cursed and defied some rules at some time.

The discipline of spring

In fact, some of our best, most creative, most memorable moments arise from dodging the very structures we, or our parents, have erected to make life good, orderly, peaceful, predictable. My story celebrates the swift, clever improvisations of the human spirit against its own curfews. This is, some say, the very muse of poetry: the same forms that were the vital expression of one generation become to the next stifling restrictions they seek to circumvent or subvert.

This rhythm seems almost to imitate on the level of the human spirit the rhythms of nature, as winter gives way to spring. Or perhaps, being a wise and good Creator, God formed our very spirits to echo the cycles of the earth.

Look out your window. Isn't the earth itself crying to your spirit, "Awake!"

Bestir yourself from your heavy, serious, deadening complacency. Be renewed in heart, mind and strength. Shake off the old trammels. Play hooky. Skip, don't walk. Break curfew. Hoot at the sky. This year, let the dandelions bloom, and spread real fertilizer on your garden.

God won't mind. Look at what he's doing all over creation, throughout time and in the hearts of every people. He is arousing new life. "Awake!" he cries. "Awake from your self-made prisons, and be renewed."

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Opinion

Can we be "neutral" or "park" our basic beliefs?

Gerald Vandezande

In a recent editorial in the *Globe and Mail*, columnist Jeffrey Simpson expresses alarm about an aspect of Stockwell Day's candidacy for the leadership of the Canadian Alliance party. He writes: "that Mr. Day has strong religious beliefs is fine; that he brings them into the public domain is not. At least not in this secular country." He concludes: "A curtain has been drawn between the religious and the secular, between the private world of religion and the public world of politics... [and] a politician who does not respect that curtain risks political retribution." ("Leave the prayer book at home, Stockwell", March 31, 2000)

Jeffrey Simpson has perfectly captured a widespread opinion throughout Canada, an opinion held not just in the secular world, but also, remarkably, within the Christian community itself.

Beliefs utterly relevant

I am not convinced. It strikes me that people's basic heart commitments and core values — whether my own biblical faith or other people's religion or ideology, be it secular or otherwise — are utterly relevant to today's public policies and budget priorities. And inevitably they shape what we do about such social-justice concerns as corporate responsibility, pornography, poverty, human rights, abortion, capital punishment, Aboriginal self-government and legal equality rights and responsibilities for gay and lesbian couples.

Why? Because every person, educational institution, labor organization, business enterprise, social movement and political party holds to certain basic values that that person or organization believes to be of "ultimate importance" (to use Webster's definition of "religion").

Indeed, even believers in "neutrality" believe; they have faith in the ideology of neutrality which has emerged historically over the past three centuries. But who can be "neutral" in the ongoing struggle between good and evil, life and death, peace and war, justice and injustice, equity and inequity, freedom and oppression, stewardship and exploitation? Can we really "park" our basic beliefs when it comes to fundamental questions of national concern?

Consider Jeffrey Simpson himself. He regularly expresses his views on a wide range of issues. His opinions reflect certain beliefs and convictions he cherishes. He voices certain basic principles and core values that live within his heart. So do other columnists, editors, and reporters.

These opinion-shapers seek to influence readers and public decision-makers about what, in their varying views, is in the best interest of our country, national unity, health care, education, the environment, the economy, and related concerns. From their different life-and-world perspectives they advocate various values, goals, public policies, and action strategies. They speak their mind as committed citizens, as people who freely contend, from their particular understanding of life, what they believe to be equitable, fair, just, responsible, stewardly, and wise.

We know that not all commentators share the same starting-point or vantage-point, do not see eye to eye. In fact, they often have conflicting values and views. For example, editors of *The Globe and Mail*, *The National Post*, and *The Calgary Herald* seldom agree on major questions such as social policy. Their strong disagreements reflect their different interpretations of the consequence of such core values as human dignity, mutual responsibility, economic equity, social justice, environmental integrity, socio-economic responsibility, and fiscal fairness.

But these editors' expressions of diverse convictions are essential to healthy dialogue and honest debate in our democratic country. In a pluralistic society such as ours, we need to know what others deep-down believe to be true and relevant to the development and implementation of national objectives and public policies that could contribute to the common good of all based on public justice for all, without discrimination.

Entitled to know leaders' views

Canadians are also entitled to know what their political leaders actually think and want to do as they seek to gain or stay in public offices with major responsibilities. Every political candidate should expect and welcome frank assessments of their basic beliefs and central convictions about what is of ultimate importance to Canada's human, social, economic, environmental, and political well-being. Candid discussions about the pros and cons of core values and views, basic goals and policies are essential to a pluralistic society and a mature democracy.

So I welcome the emerging discussion about the principles and policies of the Canadian Alliance and their leadership candidates. However, I disagree with Jeffrey Simpson that "a curtain" be drawn "between the religious and secular." To privatize faith and ideology would be to fracture our public debate; it would be to deprive public discourse of the insights we all must contribute to help build a free, responsible and just society.

Gerald Vandezande, former National Public Affairs Director of Citizens for Public Justice, is the author of **Justice, Not Just Us: Faith Perspectives and National Priorities.**

Thank God for good changes

John de Vries

It's amazing what God has done through people in responding to the needs of persons with developmental disabilities.

This year's Easter celebration will be much richer when we see how persons with developmental disabilities were treated until very recently. History makes this year's Friendship theme, *Show Them Jesus* even more special! Together we are all part of God's family. However, it was with the landmark decision by Judge Genest in 1977 that persons with developmental disabilities were given effective health care. A brief historical overview shows us how God's spirit has empowered people to respond positively to the physical and spiritual needs of persons with developmental disabilities.

Disabled people were considered 'subhuman organisms'

As recently as the Reformation (1600 A.D.) persons with developmental disabilities were considered 'subhuman organisms'. They were treated as if they were animals. They were called non-human 'changelings', possessed by evil spirits or the devil. For instance, Martin Luther, a Reformer but still a person of his time, responded to a severely disabled twelve-year old with these words to the Prince of Saxony, "If I were the Prince I would take this child to the Molds River and drown it." When the Prince refused to take the advice Luther said, "The Christian should pray that the Lord take this Devil away" (Luther's Table talk).

More recently, community acceptance and inclusion of persons with developmental disabilities has grown immensely! But not until very recently, in 1977, were persons with developmental disabilities finally granted equal status to other persons. A year before Judge Genest's landmark decision, Dr. Ben Goldberg, C.P.R.I. London, noted that persons with Down's Syndrome who often suffered 'duodenal atresia', a death-creating blockage between the stomach and the intestine, were not treated and left to die. After Dr. Goldberg testified in court, Judge Genest ruled that the rights of the child were supreme. Parents, doctors and nurses of the child could no longer allow disabled children to die from an untreated condition. Thank God for this advance in the physical care of persons with developmental disabilities.

At almost the same time a major advance took place to address the spiritual needs of persons with developmental disabilities. During the1980s Friendship ministries sprouted and blossomed. From the desire of Christian parents to have their child with Down's Syndrome learn about Jesus and His love, the Friendship movement began to address spiritual needs. As persons made in God's image, loved by Christ, they were neither 'changelings', nor devil possessed, nor unworthy of full medical care. Thank God for parents and educators who developed Friendship materials to show them Jesus. As a result Friendship materials are now being used by many different denominations. It continues to grow. There are now over 183 groups; an all time high. God is reaching out to more of Canada's 300,000 disabled through Friendship ministries.

No longer are persons thrown into rivers, used for circus entertainment or denied due medical attention. Now we nurture them spiritually in the love of Christ through Friendship. It's the miracle of Christ's love! This Easter thank God for good, life-giving, physical and spiritual advances that equip persons with developmental disabilities for the ministry of love as God's covenant partners and as friends of Jesus. Thank God for the great things He has done and is doing today through friends of Friendship. Amazing grace!

Rev. John de Vries, Jr. is President of Friendship Groups Canada, based in London, Ont.

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Education/Environment

Hungry Langley students raise money for global causes

LANGLEY TIMES, RICHARD LAMB

Langley Christian students take part in the 30-hour famine.

Peter Roukema

LANGLEY, B.C. — On Thursday, April 6 and Friday April 7, 300 students from Langley Christian Middle and High School (LCMHS) joined approximately 160,000 teenagers across the country as they starved themselves for 30 hours as part of World Vision's 30 Hour Famine.

The money raised will be used to help alleviate child poverty and suffering on a global scale. World Vision's goal this year was to raise $3.5 million. Some of the projects funded by the famine are:

- Rwanda: Food Security for Child Headed Households
- Cambodia: Landmine Awareness
- Cambodia and Romania: Street Kids
- Ethiopia: Afforestation
- Guatemala and Tanzania: improving conditions for young girls
- Honduras: Relief and development after hurricane Mitch
- Emergency Funds: As the funds come in, a large amount is now needed for help in Mozambique.

Mural designed, crafted

LCMHS joined forces with Langley's Willowbrook Shopping Centre to raise awareness of the event. A large mural designed and crafted by LCMHS's Art students was also on display at the mall.

In a show of support for the large number of people in the world that work and live on an empty stomach, the faminers participated in a 7 km. March for Hope in the middle of the fast. The march which brought them from the school to the mall, also featured an escort by a FIDO Hummer, a BMW X5, and a llama pulling a cart full of food for the local Food Bank. Students broke their fast with a huge barbecue at the school.

Last year LCMHS raised $18,000 and was the top fundraiser in B.C. and second in the nation.

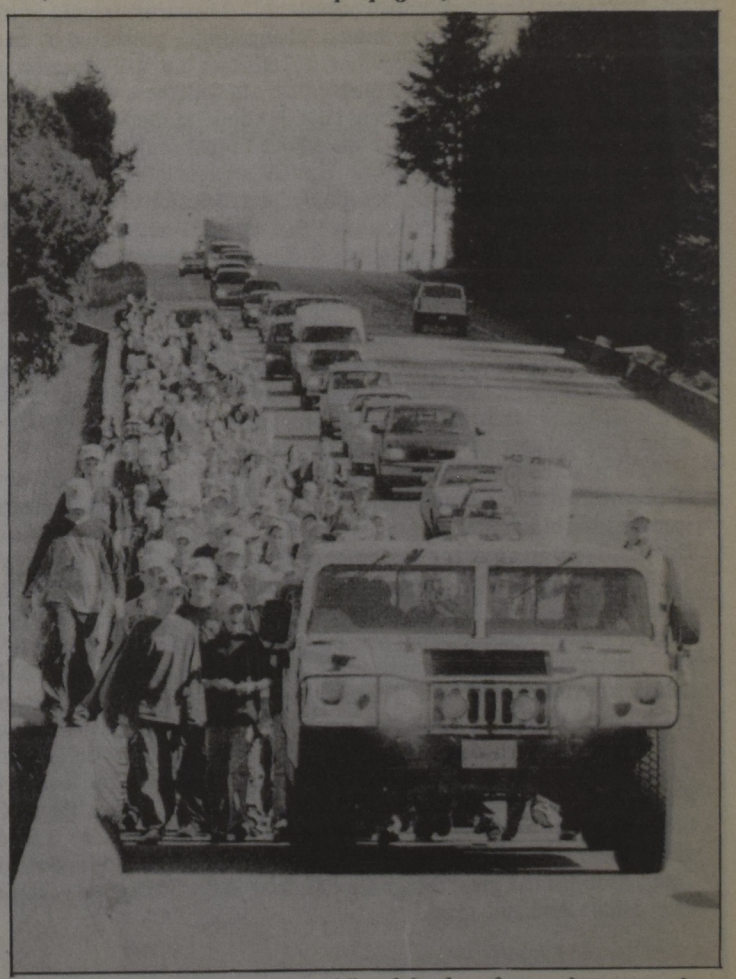
Strange incentives

This year, there were a number of incentives for the students to collect all of their pledges. The student organizers convinced the Middle School vice principal to have his head shaved if the school raised $30,000; the High School's vice principal to lose his hair at $35,000; Principal Peter VanHuizen's hair at $40,000, and at $45,000 the rest of the staff would dye their hair for a week.

In view of last year's already impressive amount, the staff thought these were "safe bets" and that their hair would remain untouched. *The students raised $48,000 in pledges!* Considering the cause, the staff will be happy to honor the wagers.

The LCMHS 30 Hour Famine gave us at LCMHS a renewed awareness of the tragedy of global poverty and starvation. We are hopeful that we have encouraged this awareness in our community as well. Special thanks go to Chris Berghuis, our Biology teacher for the countless hours and flawless execution of this community building event.

(See related story and photo on page 7.)



The March for Hope, in the middle of the fast, featured an escort by a FIDO Hummer.

Let's talk cars and life

Creation waits...

John Wood

Sometimes the hardest things to see are those that are right in front of us. Cars are like that. They make a huge impact on our daily lives, but most of us spend little time thinking about them. Each week I pull the "Wheels" section out of the paper and lay it aside. I seldom open it up. It was different last year when we were searching for a new car. Then for 3 or 4 weeks I devoured everything on auto lore that I could get my hands on. I was forced to think about cars after our faithful steed had succumbed to the harsh realities of years of winter driving in Alberta.

Two teens and one car, or none?

When the estimates for repairs came in, they exceeded the book value by about a third. So we held a family meeting to consider our options. For a day or two we talked about the possibility of living without a car. My wife and I have jobs that are nearby or on a direct bus line. And we have managed fairly well as a one-car family, despite two active teenagers.

But it didn't take long to realize that we would have real problems as a "no-car" family. Even here in the midst of an urban center, with a fair transit system, the limitations were judged to be too great. And that is the choice that most North Americans make with little thought to all that follows. But some things cost us more than we realize, and the automobile is a classic example.

For people who depend upon an automobile, or more typically a truck, for their livelihood, the thought of going "car-less" seems just plain crazy. But most of us don't actually need a car; we need what a car does. We need transportation and the access to goods and services that a car provides. Yet there are relatively few places in North America where one can live without daily access to a personal vehicle.

How cars shape our lives

The small choices you and I make each day add up. We have now lived with personal automobiles for so long that we cannot live without them. The car, or rather the infra-structure needed to operate it – roads, service stations, parking spaces, garages – all reshape our lives. To make room for them we have shaped our landscape, our cities, our neighborhoods and our houses to the scale of a car. These are big, fast, noisy, dirty machines. If you have somehow forgotten that, then take a walk along the nearest arterial. The blast of traffic-generated wind, dirt and noise overwhelms you.

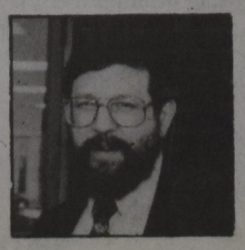
The deceptive thing about a car is that once you are inside the cocoon you enter a different world. Protected from your surroundings, it takes an act of will to remember that someone on foot or a bicycle is having a very different experience.

Our problem with cars is not what they do. It isn't a question of transport. As Alan During has pointed out, "most people believe the alternative to cars is better transit. In truth, it's better neighborhoods." This is a surprising conclusion. The problem is that we have let this particular technology so shape where we live and how we live that we can't live without it. And the real costs of this technology to health, safety, and the environment are often hidden.

Counting the hidden costs

It is these hidden costs that are beginning to be debated. The promise of reduced congestion, for instance, has always required more land for roadways. This common-sense bargain is losing its lustre. Studies in many urban areas show that more roads can actually damage the local economy, while doing little to relieve congestion.

Urban sprawl is an expensive proposition. In places like the lower Fraser Valley or Whatcom County in Washington, the agriculture sector is paying the price for sprawl. In some areas, farming is no longer viable. I know that the conversion of land to transportation is only one part of a complex puzzle. But what it shows is that we need a new way of looking at life. A view that scales communities to human, not merely machine dimensions.



John R. Wood teaches environmental science at The King's University College, Edmonton.

The 30 hour famine: excerpts from student reflections

Note: The following are observations from Langley Christian High School students about their involvement with the latest 30-hour famine:

Something hit Langley Christian High School last week. Something big. What had been a normal high school turned into a united group of people who worked together to make a difference and take a stand. I was one of those people and I think I know what happened those few inspired days....

We were inspired by the thought of prizes, with the thought of our school in the newspaper. But one thing Mr. Berghuis said that inspired us more than fame or prizes could. He told us that what we were doing was for God.

Kristen Wilms

By choosing to fast for 30 hours I was forced to step out of my comfort zone and spend 30 hours in reality. 30 hours of no solid food.... I can't even begin to think of what a week without food is like. I hate to think about all the people who spend their lives starving. If they want water, which is basically all there is for them, they have to risk getting very ill. The little water that there is, is probably polluted with sewage or parasites.... I now see why my mom gets so upset with me when I don't eat my bread crusts.

Marsh Vaartstra

Last year our school raised $18,000. This year we were told that if we raised $30,000, the middle school vice-principal would have his head shaved; $35,000 would get the high school principal's head shaved; and $40,000 would make the overall principal shave his head. If we raised $45,000 there were 22 staff members that would dye their hair (red, green, white, blue, etc.) for a week. We raised more than $47,000 and the students were all ecstatic.

Lynola Vis

Around dinner time on the first day, my stomach growled a lot and I felt this empty void in my stomach. That empty feeling stayed until the 30 hours were over.... It was hard not to eat, when we have so much food in the house. It's hard to think about how if we're hungry we can eat, but those without food can't. There's no cupboard they can open or fridge with plenty of food. These people go without food and drink for much longer than 30 hours.

Danielle Ostermeyer

LANGLEY TIMES, RICHARD LAMB

The Langley March for Hope featured a llama pulling a cart of food for the local food bank.

It didn't hit me till we got close to the end of the famine that after 30 hours I can eat, but kids in other countries can't. It is a harsh reality, and every time I think about it my heart aches.

Tim Callaghan

I think it makes us realize how easy we have it. It also gives us a bit of an idea of what people all over the world have to go through every day.... For me I found that I didn't really get hungry, so I thought that it would have been better for me if it went a little longer....

No name

And an acrostic poem by Christina Welsh:

Face the Famine

For all the kids around the world
A way to show we care
Choose to make a difference.
Every dollar saves a life.

The chance to help save a life
Help those who are in need
Every small bit helps

Follow in Jesus' footsteps.
Around the world children go
hungry
Make a difference
Imagine all the children's faces.
Now is your chance.
End the suffering.

The spiritual discipline of going to movies

Harry der Nederlanden

After the presentation of the Academy Awards in March, several church leaders in North America scolded Hollywood for selecting films that are morally harmful or degrading. Even the Catholic bishops of Mexico got in on the act, condemning the Academy's choices as "a propaganda window for abortion, sexual promiscuity and homosexuality."

One evangelical reviewer described *American Beauty* as "the most depressing film I have seen in quite some time." He summarized the contents: "Hubby hates his job, wife and daughter belittle him, and he harbors a self-hate. The wife is a realtor attempting to find happiness through possessions and power. Their daughter is, well, like every other movie teenager: smart beyond her years, yet as cynical and dark as Wednesday Addams of 'The Addams Family' movie." He went on to suggest that the film could be a significant setback to "those attempting to develop a spiritual walk."

Evangelicals in the U.S. recently handed out some awards of their own at the Epiphany Awards, recognizing films and t.v. dramas they considered morally uplifting, among them episodes of *Jag* and *Walker, Texas Ranger*. (See CC, April 3: "Christian Oscars")

Disappointing attitude

The attitude revealed by Christian leaders in this skirmish in the so-called "culture wars" is deeply disappointing to me. I was impressed by the film *American Beauty*; it's the only film I've ever paid to see twice in the theatre. It offers a more profound insight into the mind and heart of our times than any of the shallow stuff selected by the organizers of the Epiphany Awards. There has been talk lately of evangelicals developing a more robust biblical worldview. Their judgments on film art don't give much evidence of this.

It is, of course, quite true that neither *American Beauty* nor *Cider House Rules* are Christian films. And it is also true that neither one looks at the sunnier side of life. *American Beauty* depicts sexual fantasies, adultery, blackmail, pot-smoking, homosexuality and murder, without explicitly condemning any of them. Neither I nor my kids, however, turn to films or novels for a code of ethics. The film does show characters living empty, hollow lives while desperately pursuing illusory ways toward fulfilment and recognition.

I would think, evangelical critics notwithstanding, that any viewer with his senses intact will notice that the film is *not* recommending this way of life, no more than T.S. Eliot in "The Wasteland" is suggesting that we should be sterile, trivial people. The film does not, it is true, provide any models or heros for us to imitate, but then even the Bible is disappointing in this regard. My own father, a very ordinary man, was a better model than any biblical character I can think of, and even he swore when he stubbed his toe (and again when he found out it was busted).

LORRY SEBASTIAN

Kevin Spacey as Burnham, in American Beauty.

I want, first, to commend *American Beauty* to you. I believe that a thoughtful Christian viewer can see in it the Hound of Heaven relentlessly pursuing his creatures, not just to the ends of the earth, but even into the labyrinths of our secular society.

To identify good film art with the portrayal of good people doing good is simplistic; it reflects a worldview at odds with a biblical view of the human condition. We do not necessarily see God in the life of a do-gooder. We can see the mercy of God in the life of a sinner. Good thing, too, or else we would not get many glimpses of God.

Looking into dark depths

If Christians condemn films just because they portray the brokenness and emptiness of contemporary life, we condemn ourselves to narrowness and our artists to mediocrity and shallowness. Worse yet, we leave the impression that Christianity is afraid to look into the dark depths of the human heart and what issues from it.

American Beauty is a contemporary morality play. The medieval morality plays *Everyman* and *Mankynde* show Death visiting someone who has become caught up in the things of the world and the joys of the flesh. The arrival of Death forces the worldly Everyman to sort out transient from permanent goods. Similarly *American Beauty* opens with the voice of the main character, Burnham, telling us that he is about to die. All through the movie we are aware that these are Burnham's last days. The story is about a quest for life, for the meaning of life, by someone who is about to die.

In fact, Burnham says that he is "dead already," referring no doubt to his life, for he gets no joy from his job and cannot communicate with either his wife or his daughter. His wife is obsessed with the pursuit of a successful career, reciting the slogans of the positive-thinking gurus and worshipping the local king of real estate. The new next-door neighbor is an ex-marine who is trying to live up to the idea of the normal, macho male and violently trying to impose that standard onto his son.

All the characters in the movie are driven by the imperative to live up to false social images or to roles that fail to inspire or sustain them. Even two of the teenagers, Burnham's daughter Jane and her boyfriend Ricky, the son of the ex-marine, who do not buy into middle-class normality, suffer under the pressure of living up to social roles and parental expectations.

Burnham, the central character, sees the sterility and emptiness of his life and opts out of the corporate rat-race. He recalls the days of adolescence when he was full of vitality and hope, when the world was still a field of dreams, and he tries to recapture that time. He buys a red Mustang convertible and gets a job flipping burgers in a fast-food place. He also develops a huge crush on his daughter's schoolmate, a teenage girl called Angela, who dresses and acts like

Continued on page 10...

Reformed Ecumenical Council accepts two new members

GRAND RAPIDS (REC) — The REC has added two new members, bringing its membership to 37 churches in 24 countries. Added were the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria and the Swaziland Reformed Church. The REC Interim Committee approved the applications in March, and delegates from these new members will join the assembly in Indonesia in July.

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (PCN) joins four other REC members from Nigeria. The PCN has about 700 congregations and close to half a million people attending. It is an old church, dating its beginning back to 1846, and already has a number of other ecumenical relations. Because of the strengthening of relationships between Reformed Churches within Nigeria, the PCN expressed a desire to share more fully with their Nigerian colleagues in external relations as well.

Swaziland lies along the border between Mozambique and South Africa. Eighty percent of its one million people are nominally Christian. The Swaziland Reformed Church is, however, the only Reformed presence in the country. It once was a part of South Africa's Dutch Reformed Church in Africa, but was separated from them in 1991. The church has about 1,300 members. It still has strong ties to the South African Dutch Reformed Church.

The Assembly this summer will vote on the ratification of these two churches, along with five others received as members since the last assembly in 1996.

Nigerian Catholic bishops call for revision to end sharia crisis

LAGOS, Nigeria (REC) — The Catholic Bishop's Conference of Nigeria (CBNC) asked the federal government to eliminate the constitutional provisions that allow the use of sharia (a religion) in civil cases. The bishops ended their four-day conference in Lagos with a call for a revision that would create a single law of the land.

"We believe that all that is required is that our land should give enough room for everyone, Christians, Muslims, and others, to further their consciences in carrying out God's will in their lives," said the bishops in a written statement signed by the Archbishop Albet Obiefuna and Bishop Michael Okoro, CNBC secretary. "To ensure a permanent solution to all these problems, we are convinced that Nigeria will now have to review the constitution along these lines."

Christian/Muslim conflict results in 400 deaths

Although Nigeria's constitution prohibits the declaration of a state religion and guaranteed the right to freedom of religion, it does permit the establishment of the sharia courts at both the state and federal levels. In the past year, several of the northern states of Nigeria have declared sharia as a state religion and instituted it fully into everyday life.

This led to conflict between Christians and Muslims that resulted in riots and as many as 400 deaths. To relieve the tension, the federal government called for a cessation of the practice of sharia as state religion until a suitable solution can be found.

The CBNC said that their opposition to the sharia does not in any way "diminish our respect for Islam and its adherents. On the contrary, we rejoice and shall continue to promote the overall good relationship existing between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria."

Catholic Church offers forgiveness to women after abortion

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Religion Today) — The Catholic Church is reaching out to women who have had an abortion. A campaign by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops uses radio and billboards in several cities to help women who feel ashamed and separated from God get counseling and find forgiveness, The Associated Press said.

Many women mistakenly think abortion is "the unforgivable sin" that severs their ties with the Church, Barbara Thorp of the Boston Archdiocese said. The Church teaches that abortion is the taking of a human life, but wants women to know they can be forgiven and restored, she said.

'Something dies inside'

"Something dies inside after an abortion," the ads proclaim, and offer a phone number to call for spiritual help. They don't mention the Catholic Church, but the number connects women with Project Rachel, a Catholic ministry for women who have had abortions.

Counselors in the Washington-Baltimore area took 150 calls in the first two weeks of the campaign, an NCCB spokeswoman said. About 40% were from non-Catholics, who were referred to rabbis, Protestant groups, or non-denominational ministers.

The outreach is part of the Church's Jubilee 2000 celebration, which emphasizes reconciliation. The eight-week campaign started in Washington, D.C., Feb. 1, and is planned for Nebraska, Massachusetts, and three other states in 10 dioceses.

Hell not annihilation, say British Evangelicals

UNITED KINGDOM (Religion Today) — Preachers should not shy away from teaching about the realities of Hell, a group of five evangelical theologians in the United Kingdom says. They concluded in a report this week that Hell is real, not just a state of annihilation.

"Hell is a conscious experience of rejection and torment," a group representing the UK Evangelical Alliance said. Their definition contrasts with a 1996 Church of England report that described Hell not as a place of eternal suffering, but as complete annihilation of the human soul and eternal separation from God, London's *Independent* reported.

Scripture says that those who reject Christ will experience physical and psychological torment, the 140-page report states. The severity of a person's sins determines the degree of suffering and punishment.

Images of the damned being cast into a lake of fire, being eaten by worms, and weeping and gnashing their teeth may be more metaphorical than literal, but the symbols are meant to depict real suffering, the theologians wrote. Nevertheless, they discouraged the use of "fire and brimstone" sermons.

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This old house: the story of a parsonage

Chapter & Verse

Mary S. Hulst Antonides

"Unless the Lord build the house, its builders labor in vain." Psalm 127:1

For several years our church offices have been housed in what we affectionately call the Parish House, the former parsonage. The two-storey, five-bedroom red brick house has been a landmark on this street since Rev. Herman Hoeksema (founder of the Protestant Reformed Church) built it in 1922.

In the 1970s, when clergy were asking to purchase their own homes and the neighborhood took a turn for the worse, the decision was made to house the church offices in the old parsonage.

On the whole, the placement has worked well. Church offices have been upstairs, with a drop-in day care centre downstairs. It has created a comfortable — even if occasionally noisy and far from barrier-free — environment for our ministry.

A few weeks ago our congregation voted with a 93 per cent majority to go ahead with plans for a new addition. The new building addition will displace this house, which will be moved one block north and across the street. Since the house needs to be moved before construction can begin, we are in the throes of packing and moving.

Treasures found in attic, closets

Through the years this building has accumulated a variety of interesting items in its closets and attic. We've found old catechism books, hymnals, Vacation Bible School materials, and even assorted computer parts. As furniture is moved, we've even discovered doors that had previously been hidden.

Two of our current members were reared in this house when their fathers served as pastors of this church. One can vividly recall raising chickens in the yard, the other can describe in detail the blue cowboy wallpaper that hung in his room. Other long-time members point to a one-of-a-kind vent in the ceiling of my office and talk about the smoking preachers who made the vent necessary.

It doesn't take long before you gain an almost reverent respect for this old house — children have been reared here, sermons written, meetings held, counsel given. How many decisions about the future of this church were made where I'm sitting? How many calls extended, received, accepted, declined? How many lives have been impacted out of this building — church members, neighbors, people in need?

'Anyone want an old house?'

We had thought initially about tearing it down — it would be cheaper, we agreed. And what can one do with an old house — even a strong one — in an urban neighborhood? We pursued many options, many non-profit housing ministries, many foundations. Anyone want an old house?

Turns out someone did.

After a few informal conversations, a formal deal was struck with Calvin College. If we could move the house, they could use it for Project Neighborhood, a ministry which places students in inner-city neighborhoods and sends them out to minister in partnership with local agencies and churches. Students live in the house along with a mentor or mentor couple, and can earn credit for this unusual life experience. We maintain ownership of the house, students can work in our ministries, and Calvin gains an even stronger presence in the heart of the city.

So this old house will be moved — and remodeled and renovated and re-commissioned. The old red brick will house young lives, eager to serve, ready to work, dedicated to God.

And so it goes: from cowboy wallpaper, computer parts, and hidden doorways to energetic students, rich ideas, and a whole new way to reach this neighborhood in the name of Jesus.

I think Herman would be happy.

Rev. Mary S. Hulst Antonides is pastor of Eastern Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Most Israeli Jews view Christians positively

CC Staff

ISRAEL — A Gallup poll conducted in December of last year in Israel reveals that Israeli Jews know very little about Christianity but that they are generally well disposed towards them. The poll was based on questions answered by 479 adults.

According to *Christians and Israel*, a periodical published from Jerusalem to promote relations between Jews and Christians, the poll showed that 1) Israeli Jews generally have a positive attitude towards Christians; 2) they have very little first-hand familiarity with Christians and their customs; and 3) they feel far less threatened by Christian missionary activity than is generally believed.

Here are some findings garnered from the Gallup poll:

A total of 59.6 per cent feel that U.S. Christians are friendly and supportive of Israel; 78.1 per cent do not regard them as antisemitic; 67.8 per cent do not regard them as missionaries seeking to convert Jews; 76.4 per cent would like to see more U.S. Christians visit Israel; 52.9 per cent felt positive or very positive about the Pope's (then upcoming) visit to Israel.

This was not based on any direct contact with Christians, for 64.2 per cent do not know any Christian well enough to consider him or her a friend, and 61.7 per cent do not know any Christians in Israel. Only 27.2 per cent identified December 25 as a date having special significance.

Israel asks whether missionary activity is harmful

ISRAEL (Religion Today) — Is missionary activity harmful to the Jewish people? Israeli's attorney general has been asked to answer that question, and his report could have serious repercussions for Messianic Jews in the country, according to World Evangelical Fellowship.

Israeli's Law of Return guarantees automatic citizenship to any Jew, and even non-Jews with a Jewish grandparent or spouse. But the government can deny citizenship to "undesirables," including those who are liable to endanger public health or security, have a criminal past, or are deemed to be acting against the Jewish people, says WEF.

Interior Minister Natan Sharansky has asked Israel's attorney general to rule as to whether missionary activity can be classified as "acting against the Jewish people." That would mean Messianic Jews who evangelize could have their citizenship revoked and be deported.

The Israeli parliament has tried to outlaw missionary activities in the past, and the Interior Ministry's action is "yet another tool to intimidate Messianic believers and attempt to silence the proclamation of the New Testament in the land," reports WEF.

Evangelical and mainline ecumenical associations soften toward one another

WHEATON, Illinois (RNS) — Relations between the U.S's liberal and conservative church groups seem to be warming. The National Council of Churches (NCC) is applauding a decision by the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) to allow dual membership in both groups. The NAE made the change in its bylaws March 6.

The NCC "rejoices in this new opportunity to draw closer to brothers and sisters in Christ," Robert Edgar, the group's general secretary, told Religion News Service. "This bold step by the NAE is evidence of God's abiding Spirit working in and through us for the sake of the world." The policy change lets denominations that are members of groups other than the NAE also hold membership in the NAE if they agree to the group's statement of faith and mission.

Antagonistic relations ease

Edgar said that the more liberal NCC and more conservative NAE, which have had an antagonistic relationship for more than 50 years, have recently experienced "a softening of the sharp conflict."

In 1996, Don Argue, former president of the NAE, was the first representative of the evangelical organization to address a general assembly of the NCC. Kevin Mannoia, the new NAE president, took part in a dialogue with NCC, Roman Catholic, and Pentecostal representatives last fall.

"I look forward to becoming better acquainted with the NAE and its work and priorities," Edgar said. "Reliant on God's guidance, we look forward to a future that brings us into the candid and discerning kind of conversation that ought to characterize Christian fellowship."

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The spiritual discipline of going to the movies

... *continued from page 7*

an oversexed model. She becomes the subject of extravagant fantasies.

In this, the film gives a deliberate parody of an ancient poetic tradition in which the beloved lady represents a transcendent beauty that inspires, energizes, and ennobles the lover, turning his life into a spiritual quest.

Chasing an image

Don Quixote, of course, is another parody of this quest romance. Burnham's quest, however, does not transfigure his world and elevate it; on the contrary, he has just fallen for an image, a debased image at that. Angela, it turns out, is not at all a sex goddess, she's just playing a role she has taken from the media because she wants to be seen as desirable, not ordinary. Like Burnham, she hates the thought of belonging to this empty, meaningless, ordinary order.

In seeking to escape his corporate prison and recover passion and a transcendent purpose in his life, Burnham has fastened onto an image created by the very corporate world he has sought to leave behind. In seeking to escape the doom of the ordinary, Angela has turned herself into a product of this same corporate world: a mere sham of beauty.

A disenchanted world

American Beauty is a powerful depiction of the reductive effect of a wholly secular, disenchanted world driven by consumerism and media images.

Christians can ill afford to denounce such depictions just because they are depressing. They say something important about the social order that we – Christians and non-Christians together – have created, and which is the legacy we leave to our children.

This is the reality that many so-called postmodernists are describing. *American Beauty* may be called a postmodern morality play. Can we as Christians deny that we have felt a similar disenchantment with much of our culture and social reality? Believers should be, if anything, even *more* alienated from the order depicted in the film, for we have a more vivid picture of how things ought to be; we are even more aware of the discrepancy. Moreover, we know that the threat is not just to our happiness; the threat is to the human heart or soul. People are dying spiritually.

American Beauty may not be a Christian film, but it is haunted by the price demanded for the renewal of life or regeneration.

Blood-red imagery

Throughout the film we get glimpses of blood-red roses in the background, and in his fantasies of Angela Burnham envisions her bathing in blood-red rose petals. In the climactic scene, Burnham is lying in a huge pool of his own blood; it is the same shade of red as all the roses that we've seen. Passion, or at least the quest for passion, and death are blended in this imagery. The film seems to recognize that the way to passion, to rebirth and to new life, is through another kind of passion – death.

The Christian viewer brings a richer knowledge to his experience, and he knows that the only way out of this deadening, soul-destroying order that offers nothing but false quests and false goods is the passion of God's Son.

Reading a lot into it

For me, seeing *American Beauty* was a genuinely edifying experience. Some CC readers may say, skeptically, "Sure, but you're reading a lot into it." To that I respond: Aren't we as believers called to do just that? Isn't this part of the spiritual discipline of enjoying the arts?

We don't stupidly contemplate the Rockies as if they're inert slabs of buckled stone; we see the hand of the almighty Creator-God in them. Can we do less with the arts of mankind? When people are struggling to come to some kind of understanding about our quest for passion and meaning in life, isn't this a sure sign that God is in the picture somewhere wrestling with them? Since we are part of this same world, its history and its aspirations woven into our very sensibilities, don't we sense that we are implicated in the same spiritual struggles?

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A healthy self-focus

Getting Unstuck

Arlene Van Hove

Self-esteem is not something parents can give children. While parenting literature is often specific on "how to raise a child's self-esteem," it is not something parents can specifically do. They can, on the other hand, "create an environment" in which children can develop a poorer or a healthier sense of themselves.

Self esteem vs. self worth

Unfortunately, the word "self-esteem" is not very useful. The term "self-worth" may be more fitting. All of us come out of our families with a sense of our own "self-worth." And it is this sense of "self worth" we take into our relationship with others.

Melanie, for instance, has lost her joy for living. She talks about other people's sorrow. She talks about the unfairness of life. But she cannot talk about herself. She is unaware of her own feelings. Suggestions of spending some time exploring her emotions are met with worried frowns.

Melanie has a friend she cares about. She's always pleased to see her and enjoys talking with her. She respects her views and opinions and will seek her out when she needs counsel. Melanie also tries to meet her friend's needs if it falls within the boundaries of their specific friendship. Her happiness is important to Melanie and she sometimes goes the extra mile to make it happen. She values her friend as a person and does not hesitate to tell her so.

Caring for others vs. caring for self

Melanie treats her friend better than she treats herself. How come? Are we not to love others as we love "ourselves?" Melanie does not believe she is as important or valuable as her friend. Suggestions to treat herself as she treats her friend are met with quizzical looks. Melanie truly believes she is selfish when she cares for herself.

The term selfish means being "*too much* concerned with our own welfare." The words "too much" are emphasized in this definition. Unfortunately, we continue to believe being concerned with our own welfare is selfish. We are suppose to care for "others" but not for ourselves.

Furthermore, we believe selfishness can lead us into "self-centredness." A term that means "stationary or unmoving, a centre around which other things move." We believe this way of living also puts an unhealthy focus on ourselves.

The need for self-awareness

The negative aspects of these two concepts have been so well ingrained into the nature of our being that it is difficult to challenge ourselves to think differently. Self focus does not necessarily have to mean selfishness or self-centredness. For instance, Melanie would benefit from getting to know herself better. She would eventually be able to see she needs to nurture herself like she nurtures her friend.

Most often when we look after our selves in an effective way, we will feel fulfilled, whole and secure, and then caring for others does not deplete our resources. Ironically, we usually have more energy and enthusiasm to do things for others when our own needs are met.

S. McMahon once wrote: "We can stop trying to be the sun, with others revolving around us, and be content to be stars, shining by ourselves." Maybe we should give this a try since millions of bright shining stars would give a more honest reflection of the greatness of a Creator who deemed us worthy enough to die for.

Arlene Van Hove is a psychotherapist with Cascade Christian Counselling Association in Surrey, B.C.

Evangelism campaign reaches more than one million people across Europe

BREMEN, Germany (EP) — Churches and Christians across Europe joined forces in March to produce ProChrist, a massive evangelism effort that reached an estimate 1.4 million Europeans with the message of Christ.

The actual site for the week-long Christian outreach event was Bremen, Germany, but the message from Bremen was broadcast via satellite to over 1,000 locations in 16 countries across the European continent in 14 different languages. Organizers announced that more than 10,000 people came forward to receive Christ during the event.

Raimund Utsch, chairman of the project, told the German news agency *Idea* that ProChrist made a significant stab into the heart of secular Europe. He estimated that one in four people who saw the evangelism broadcasts was not religious.

In an area of the globe where church attendance is seriously waning, the ProChrist message reached a significant number of "unchurched" viewers.

Unusual advertising techniques

More than 3,000 local churches helped the ecumenical effort, supplying volunteers and money to further the ProChrist message within their own neighborhoods. Protestant and Catholic churches in Germany joined forces and resources to help the effort.

European Christians found unusual ways to advertise the ProChrist evangelism event. Special stamps were affixed to letters at local post offices and a German confectioner made special ProChrist candies. Flyers for the event were handed out with every burger purchase at McDonald's restaurants.

This was the fourth ProChrist event in Europe. The first took place in Essen, Germany in 1993, and featured evangelist Billy Graham.

Consider the daffodils

Intangible Things
Heidi VanDerSlikke

The daffodils on my living room table remind me of a dear lady I knew briefly ten years ago. I can still hear her faltering voice in my head, "A daffodil is a place to stick your nose."

It was the spring of 1990 and I was a patient at University Hospital in London, Ontario. At first I had a private room because that was all that was available, Then one night I was transferred into a ward with another woman, I smiled and said hello to her as I entered the room. She mumbled something unintelligible in reply. A while later she was stretching out her arm, trying to reach the phone on the night stand. It went crashing to the floor, startling both of us. I picked up the phone and placed it in her lap. She nodded awkwardly at me and swallowed a few times, clearly wanting to say something. Finally, "Thank you," came out. Still staring at me, she managed, "Please dial it for me."

A friendship blossoms

I hesitated, unsure of who I was dealing with. Was this woman an Alzheimer's patient? Maybe she was mentally handicapped; or was she waiting here until a bed on the psychiatric floor became available? At any rate she continued to stare at me with pleading eyes, so I punched in the numbers for her as she gave them to me, one by one. Thus began our friendship.

Her name was Caroline. She was 53 years old and in the end stages of multiple-sclerosis. Her husband of thirty years came in every day. In the morning he groomed her and got her dressed. After work he arrived to take her in a wheelchair for a tour of the hospital, feed her supper and help her get ready for bed. By nine o'clock he would go home and have his own supper.

I discovered my roommate was a beautiful person trapped inside a dying and uncooperative body. Through it all she never complained, and patiently persevered as best she could. Her mind was still very sharp, and I learned it was worth the wait to hear what she had to say.

Caroline had been a teacher, diagnosed with MS in her late twenties. After years of trying, she and her husband became parents to a fine baby boy. At that point she became a full-time mom. Her son's graduation photo stood proudly on the shelf. He had grown up to be a high school teacher and was working in Toronto. Caroline hoped to be alive for his wedding planned for late that summer. Her only regret was that she would likely never get to see her grandchildren.

A fist full of daffodils

One morning her husband showed up with a fist full of daffodils, picked from Caroline's flower bed at home. It was the only time I saw tears trickle down Caroline's cheeks. "A daffodil is a place to stick your nose," she said in her halting style. She proceeded to tell me of the spring morning when her son, at the age of four, came charging into the house clutching every last daffodil from her garden, He was excited about their unique design and exclaimed, "And look Mom, right here is the place to stick your nose."

"I told my little boy that day, he was right. God takes care of every tiny detail of our lives in such a special way. And you know what? It's my faith in God that has carried me through all these difficult years. I probably won't see next year's daffodils, but that's okay because I know God has better things in mind."

I went home at the end of the week thankful to return to my family and life's routine. But every year when the daffodils bloom I think back on Caroline's simple statement of faith and smile.

Heidi Van Der Slikke enjoys daffodils in Harriston, Ont.

Sears agrees to let workers observe their Sabbaths

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP) — Retail giant Sears, Roebuck and Co. agreed to a settlement which will allow repair workers to observe a Sabbath if required by their religion.

New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, who had threatened to sue Sears over the issue, said the company also agreed to pay $225,000 for employer education programs, $120,000 in training scholarships for Sabbath observers and $100,000 to cover the cost of his investigation.

"People should not be forced to choose between their faith and supporting their family," Spitzer said April 11.

A satisfactory settlement

A spokesperson for Sears said the company "is pleased we were able to reach a satisfactory settlement." Sears admitted no wrongdoing in the settlement, which appears to apply only to workers in New York State.

The case began after Kalman Katz, an Orthodox Jew, claimed Sears refused to hire him because he wouldn't work Saturdays. At least five other people came forward with similar complaints, including Donovan Reed, a recently converted Seventh-day Adventist who was fired after telling Sears he needed to begin taking Saturdays off.

Katz said he was told that all repair workers needed to work Saturday because it was the company's biggest day, but Spitzer's investigation found that Tuesday is actually the chain's biggest day for auto repair.

Seventh-day Adventist lawyer Mitchell Tyner, an associate in the world Church's Office of General Counsel, welcomed the New York settlement as a step forward in educating employers about the need to be more flexible in accommodating their employees' religious beliefs. "It's especially encouraging to see a state attorney general get serious about religious discrimination in the workplace and to achieve something substantial," said Tyner, who provided the New York Attorney General's office with information on similar Sabbath employment cases involving Adventist Church members. Tyner noted, however, that protections for Sabbath observance remain weak. "The Workplace Religious Freedom Act (WRFA), introduced into the House on April 11, would strengthen the legal position of individuals trying to juggle the demands of their faith with those of their work," said Tyner, who helped draft the legislation.

The bill would "clarify the burden of employers to accommodate the religious needs of their employees," said Tyner, adding that WFRA would provide both employers and employees with a better understanding of the legal requirements. "Two employees, for instance, would be able to voluntarily swap individual shifts without violating a labor union contract," he says.

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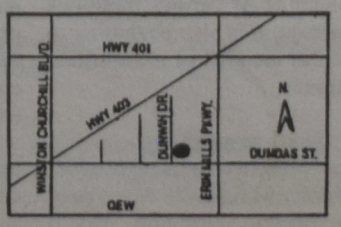

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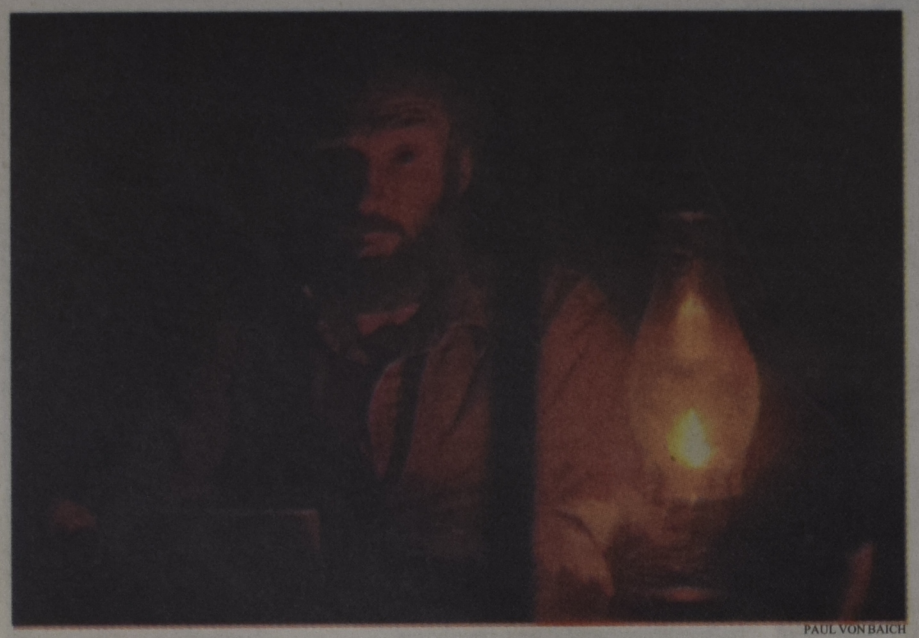
Disciplines for discipleship



PAUL VON BAICH

By forcing ourselves into the habit of regularly reflecting on God, being in his presence, connecting with his Word, allowing his Spirit to speak to us, we allow God to take over and predominate our thoughts and our actions.

Erick Schuringa

The spiritual disciplines are making a comeback in protestant Christianity. The disciplines include things like meditation, fasting, silence, solitude, simplicity, and submission – activities that have not been very popular in recent western Christianity. They also, of course, include worship, service, and prayer, which have always been staples of the Christian life.

The spiritual disciplines appeal to an age that is seeking spiritual depth in a fast-paced, superficial world oriented to material goods.

The churches of the Reformation dropped many of the disciplines partly due to excesses like self-flagellation and also because of the popular misunderstanding that they earned one a place with God. In this day of ecumenism, however, there is a greater openness to revisit these broader traditions of Christian living. This openness is seen in worship, where the blending of various traditions is common; it is also beginning to happen in the area of the spiritual disciplines.

A time of searching

The present era is a time of searching and renewal. Many people are open to spirituality, even if they are not open to church. The spiritual disciplines appeal to an age that is seeking spiritual depth in a fast-paced, superficial world oriented to material goods.

Why add these disciplines to my Christian life? For many people, life is busy enough and to talk about spiritual disciplines sounds like adding yet one more activity to the committees, small group bible studies, worship services, and fellowship events they already attend. It is precisely this busyness of church life that draws some to the disciplines. Surely the Christian life should produce something more than fatigue and burnout. Surely there is more than doing my duty and keeping the institution active. To go even deeper, surely there must be some powerful change in my very self that comes through faith in Jesus Christ. It is the move from performing works out of duty alone to the path of discipleship that leads to the discovery of the disciplines.

Personal journey

My own journey was stimulated by a couple of books. First, Richard Foster's classic *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (New York: HarperCollins, 1978), which is a very practical introduction to the purpose and practice of the disciplines. Second, Dallas Willard's *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God* (New York: HarperCollins, 1998), which challenges the church and its members to move from seeing Christianity as cosmic life insurance to a life-changing, world-shaping reality. Both of these books point to "following Jesus" as something generally misunderstood or ignored, even among those who carry the self-designation "Christian."

In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), for example, Jesus teaches about prayer, saying "When you pray...," because he assumed prayer to already be part of his disciples' life. Jesus also says, "When you fast...," and he goes on to teach about fasting without ever saying exactly how to do it. Jesus assumed that fasting was part of spiritual life. Jesus himself fasted. Think of Jesus in the desert (Matthew 4). He does not eat for forty days. He is fasting. He is also engaging in the disciplines of silence, solitude and presumably prayer. At the end of forty days, the Bible says that "he was hungry." Then the tempter comes.

Why did Jesus fast?

The key question is: Why did Jesus fast so long before the temptation? Was he trying to give the devil a fair shot at him, since after all he was the Son of God? If so, he was not really "like us in every way except for sin" as Hebrews claims. To be like us, Jesus had to be really tempted, not just play acting and not wearing himself down to give Satan a chance. The better explanation is (and I must credit Dallas Willard for this insight) that Jesus fasted and used other spiritual disciplines so that he could be ready for the battle. When he says, "Follow me," Jesus wants us to take note that the Son of God needed to fast to prepare himself to battle temptation.

Is there anything here to suggest that we do not need such disciplines?

The question of spiritual discipline is as foundational as: "What do you think of the Christ"? If Jesus came to earth to provide eternal life insurance through believing the right set of truths, then most of what he did was superfluous. However, if his statements, "Take up your cross and follow me," and "My yoke is easy and my burden is light," are to be taken at face value, then we better study what Jesus did to stay close to the Father. Jesus does set us free; and the freedom he gives is to live holy lives. Living holy lives starts with actually taking Jesus at his word and imitating him in spiritual discipline.

One concern about spiritual disciplines is that they quickly become ways of earning our place with God. If I go to church enough, give enough, serve enough, and pray enough, God will bless me. To add fasting is, from this perspective, just another attempt to be "good enough." But this is a misconception, albeit an easy one to slip into. The disciplines are not goals in themselves. They are not disciplines at all when done for themselves. Each discipline is undertaken to free oneself from bondage to desires, lusts, things, and even from schedules that trap us and impede spiritual growth.

The disciplines work indirectly. That is important, because when we try to change our actions directly we run stuck. Try consciously not to think about chocolate for example. What are you thinking about? Likely it is chocolate. The disciplines are ways of deliberately thinking on "Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely...." (Philippians 4:8)

By forcing ourselves into the habit of regularly reflecting on God, being in his presence, connecting with his Word, allowing his Spirit to speak to us, we allow God to take over and predominate our thoughts and our actions.

Transformation, not modification

Christian growth is from the inside out. It is not about behavior modification or the appearance of righteousness. It is about being transformed by the renewing of the heart and the reorientation of the mind (cf. Romans 12:1,2). The spiritual disciplines are all about intentionally spending time to allow that transformation to take place.

Jesus posed some incredible challenges to his followers. It is easy to sidestep his call by saying, "Well, nobody is perfect," or "It will not be complete until Christ comes again." Those truths do not undercut the fact that Jesus gave us the tools and the Holy Spirit to forge ahead in being salt and light in our culture. The spiritual disciplines provide an opportunity to thrive in what we have received through faith in Jesus Christ.

Anyone interested in practicing the disciplines would do well to read as a primer one of the books listed above, or another by Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives* (New York: HarperCollins, 1988). Underlying all three books and clear in all three subtitles is the basic assumption: there is concrete life-change available in Jesus Christ. Dusting off the disciplines and entering into active discipleship can only enhance our embrace of the person and work of Jesus Christ.

GARO NALBANDIAN

The Judean desert east of Jerusalem: Jesus fasted in the desert, also engaging in the disciplines of silence, solitude and prayer.

Erick Schuringa is the pastor of Bethel Christian Reformed Church, Waterdown, Ont., and a member of Christian Courier's Editorial Advisory Committee.

Spiritual disciplines

Spiritual discipline: an oxymoron?

Carolyn Guen-Hart

In much of contemporary culture, I sometimes wonder if the term "spiritual discipline" sounds like an oxymoron, an inner contradiction. For if spirituality is increasingly understood as purely inner and individual, while discipline is purely outer and communal, discipline might be seen, at the very least, as a threat to spirituality. However, for older Christian traditions, this is not an oxymoron but a difficult necessary tension: Christians of past ages have understood that the spiritual needs to be disciplined, needs to be trained and formed.

I understand the spiritual as the depth-dimension of life, as that sacred space where we hear and respond to God in our inmost heart, as individuals and as communities. I believe that engagement on this depth level is crucial to our wholehearted involvement with cultural projects in the world headed in the direction of God's kingdom.

Not all spirituality of God

Such heart-engagement is created into us, but needs to be gently but searchingly formed in accordance with Christian tradition, community, pastoral concerns, and patterns of discernment. For in the complexities of life we need always to discern the spirits. Not every spirituality is of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and not every spirituality is focused on Jesus the Messiah.

Some of the classic spiritual disciplines are prayer, fasting, penitence, silence, discernment, stewardship, catechism, liturgical practices, and so on.

I'm aware that these all sound like activities to be done primarily within the church. And indeed we do many of these in church in a very focal way. But in the reformational tradition of "holy worldliness," of a very this-worldly yet kingdom-focused piety, in principle everything we do that is worth doing can become a spiritual discipline — if we approach it in the right frame of mind. That is, spiritual disciplines are not activities that belong exclusively to one separate, "holy" sphere of life, but belong equally to all spheres of life, viewed in their depth dimensions.

We all have personal tasks that take on the dimensions of spiritual disciplines. We may struggle to give careful attention to administrative details that make life run more smoothly for all of us. Or we may struggle to hold our temper or to think just a bit before we speak. Or we may have to work hard at remembering to do those little things that show other people how much we appreciate them, or to put food scraps in the composter rather than in the garbage can. For everyone these things will be different, but almost anything can become for us a spiritual discipline.

Institution-building: a spiritual discipline

In the Canadian CRC, institution-building has been, in effect, a tradition of spiritual discipline. As I have listened to the founders, I hear that many reformed institutions began as radical social critique, but this critique was made by exemplifying a better way, that is, by forming Christian institutions. At their heart, then, these reformed institutions represent a deep spiritual engagement with various cultural spheres and projects, such as work, justice, knowledge, and cultivation. They exemplify spiritual engagement but also spiritual discipline.

The people who founded these institutions live somewhere between radical critique and the terms of actual social engagement, or to speak a little differently, between God's eschatological kingdom and the world God made, a world peopled by fragile human creatures who engage in fragile cultural projects.

That is why many of our institutions occupy a middle ground between outright subversion and acceptance of the status quo. They seek radical change which can also be concretely embodied in a way recognizable to our own culture as a live and attractive option. At their best, then, reformed institutions represent a radical critique which is at the same time generous, engaged, and winsome.

This complex project means that in changing our culture we need also allow ourselves to be changed. We live in a space that requires complex judgments and discernment.

When do changes represent fundamental spiritual "compromise"? And when do they represent modifications that are necessary if they are to be redemptively embodied in a particular setting? How may radically reforming critique be embodied so that it is both heard and realizable? When is a "difference" in one of our organizations just odd, and when is it redemptively significant? Where do we need to be *like* other organizations of our kind, and where do we need to be *different*? As our institutions grow and mature, I think it likely that we will need to keep re-examining our assumptions about what kind of change is desirable, and what kind of change is possible. And I think it likely that transformation of a whole area of culture will involve us, as cultural agents, in inner transformation ourselves.

GOSPEL PUBLISHING HOUSE

I have the utmost respect for this sort of complex cultural engagement. I truly believe that it is one of the greatest gifts of the reformed tradition to the larger Christian community — and to efforts at cultural engagement of all sorts. For, believing that both the eschatological ideals and the hard material realities are alike part of God's good creation, this means we must live in the middle way. We cannot choose one side over the other. But this is a difficult discipline to maintain.

Surely the twin temptations to a middle way are: either a radical activism which cannot respect the actually existing situation, or status quo activity which loses its reforming edge. Both options are one-sided. The discipline becomes even more stringent for those who live and work in non-Christian organizations like our professions, universities, corporations, and so on.

That is why, although I maintain the broader principle that everything worth doing can become a spiritual discipline, our classic spiritual disciplines are still essential. For these classic spiritual disciplines belong particularly to the church as gathered community, where we remember and celebrate and reflect on our own core identity as Christian believers.

I have recommended to students going into the professions that one really important thing we can do to prevent ourselves from becoming oppressive experts, who disable rather than enable others, is to participate in the Lord's Supper. Here we come not as professionals to our clients but as hungry, adopted children in need of God's bread and water of life. Here we can celebrate as part of God's community focused on shalom.

Heart conversion crucial

We need the classic spiritual disciplines to remind us that ongoing heart conversion is crucial to the kind of discipline we need to work fruitfully within organizations. We need to maintain the rhythm of coming home to our own primary community and going out into the world to bring the gifts of that community into the life of the world.

But there is more. There will always be times in life when our activities in the world do not go as planned. When the doing fails; when the acting fails; when the cultural engagement fails to engage — at those difficult times we can only return to those spiritual disciplines which call us back to our core calling and our fundamental Christian identity. A Marxist social activist once said to a Christian friend of mine that Christians in social justice organizations have amazing "staying power." I was happy to hear that. But I also know that, in addition to staying power, sometimes we need also to be willing to allow some things to die so that more fruit may be born, and to be willing to repent in our inmost hearts so that we may more wholeheartedly give ourselves to God's good work in the world.

Carroll Guen-Hart is director of the Worldview Studies Program at the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto.

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The CEO as pastor

COMSTOCK

Wally Kroeker

Ever notice how often the term "CEO" comes up in describing pastors? The other day it surfaced in a book on church leadership. There was a section devoted to "The pastor as CEO." It wasn't flattering.

Do some pastors behave like Chief Executive Officers? Should they? A pastor who is a dynamic, energetic leader and strives for measurable goals would be described by some in CEO terms. The label might also be applied to an autocratic pastor who is obsessed with winning.

A church periodical recently complained about churches that "follow business models." In many cases, it said, an "employer/employee" attitude has crept in. Pastors talk more openly than they used to about salary and benefits. They'll stop short, though, of calling themselves "hired," still preferring to be "called." But when their services are abruptly terminated they feel "fired" like anyone else.

There are times when pastors would like to be treated like CEOs, such as when a church decides to "un-call" them. They would like to have the golden handshake that many departing executives manage to arrange no matter how meagrely the company fared on their watch.

Do CEOs get a bum rap in these comparisons? They seem to be stereotyped as dictators who have nothing better to do than bark orders. Is that a fair description of the CEO's work? Maybe it's time to turn the tables and check into the ways in which CEOs behave like pastors, rather than the other way around.

- Like a pastor, a CEO is held accountable for the performance of the organization, regardless of where any fault may lie. A CEO will be blamed by the stockholders if the desired rewards aren't forthcoming. "Where's our dividend?" isn't far from "We aren't being fed."
- The best CEOs are servant leaders. They get things done by serving others and empowering them. They don't need to use force to bring out the best in people.
- The CEO sets the moral tone for the corporation. No matter how many mission statements or codes of conduct a company may have, it is top leadership that sets the example. No one believes a code of ethics if the people at the top don't model it first.
- CEOs have to do a lot of hand holding. They may not be trained counsellors, but they get to hear a lot of woes, not to mention bickering. Through it all, they have to maintain confidentiality.
- They share leadership with others. If they have any sense, good CEOs will delegate and share responsibility rather than do it all themselves. They know that a big ego will burn out quickly. They are like a good pastor who grasps that the real work of the church is done by the members.

Having said this, there's still one more way in which CEOs could be like pastors: they, too, should see their work as an assignment from God. Wouldn't it be great if CEOs could say without blushing that they were "called" to their work?

Going a step further, imagine if churches commissioned CEOs and other businessfolk for workplace service. Imagine if churches commissioned all their members for service in daily life. They'd probably soon be bursting at the seams. Then they'd have to expand. Before you know it they'd be building new premises or a branch office.

Just like a CEO.

The above article appeared at: a website created by Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), an organization for Christians who seek to connect their faith and daily work in a needy world. Together MEDA members help support MEDA's business-oriented development programs in 10 countries, as well as low-income entrepreneurs in North America.

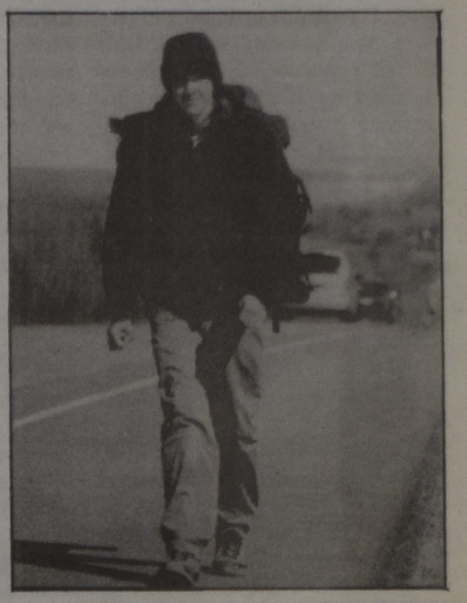
Modern-day pilgrims travel by foot or bicycle

Alan Doerksen (with files from the Associated Press)

TORONTO — For centuries, pilgrimages have been an important part of the religious experience of many Christians. But as the 21st century starts, some Christians are taking new approaches to pilgrimages. Two examples are a 19-year-old who is walking across Canada to raise awareness of pro-life issues, and a group of Christian pilgrims who recently bicycled through Israel along paths where Jesus walked 2000 years ago.

Andrew Fournier, a 19-year-old from Arnprior, Ont., has decided to walk across Canada on a "Pilgrimage for Life" to promote awareness of pro-life issues, which he feels are not always given adequate coverage in the mainstream media. Toronto-based Campaign Life Coalition Youth is sponsoring and helping to organize his pilgrimage.

Fournier's answer to the question "How far would you go to save a life" is "Across Canada," according to a Campaign Life Coalition Youth press release. He began his trans-Canada trek from Sydney, Nova Scotia, on March 1, 2000, and is walking along the newly created Trans-Canada Trail. He expects to take 300 days to cross Canada.



HERM WILLS PHOTO FOR *THE INTERIM*

A pilgrim's progress: Andrew Fournier.

'Pro-life means *all* life'

Catherine Fournier, Andrew's mother, recently wrote a story for the *Interim*, a pro-life newspaper based in Toronto, in which she explained the reasons for his cross-Canada Pilgrimage for Life. She quotes her son as saying, "Pro-life means supporting *all* life. Anyone who helps the poor, sick or hungry, by sending money to Third World organizations or giving to food banks is pro-life whether they know it or not. I'm taking a cause that everyone finds easy to support — sending food to already-born poor children — and connecting to its logical partner, one protecting pre-born children."

Catherine Fournier explains, "Most of Andrew's Pilgrimage for Life route is on the Trans-Canada Trail, a cross-country trail of existing nature trails, abandoned rail lines and new connecting trail sections. It seems made for Andrew's journey.... The trail passes many small communities spread along the old rail lines, giving him lots of opportunities to prevail upon people's charity and hospitality and to explain his pilgrimage to those he meets along the way.

"And his explanation will challenge those who hear it. He hopes to change some hearts both with the example of his pilgrimage and by his understanding of what it means to be pro-life. Half the funds raised during his pilgrimage will go to Campaign Life Coalition Youth. The other half will be given to Canadian Food for Children, a volunteer-run organization that sends food and other much needed supplies to Third World children.... The next 300 days will challenge Andrew as he carries out his pilgrimage. It will challenge us too, as we let him go."

Recently, 50 Christian bicyclists from North America, England and Scotland took part in another kind of pilgrimage, when they biked 200 km on a five-day tour of sanctuaries in Israel and Palestinian areas, according to an Associated Press report.

For David Hiebert, of Scottdale, Penn., biking through the barren Judean Desert — where tradition holds that Jesus wandered for 40 days before he was tempted by the devil — was the most hands-on way to experience the Bible.

"I understood Christ's work much better being in the wilderness," Hiebert said, after a gruelling bicycle ride for 40 km along tough desert trails. "To travel any other way, you just don't get the same feeling that you get biking."

Travel on two wheels can offer tourists an adventurous trip to many holy sites, while staying within whatever time and financial constraints they may have. For many, cycling also awakens a spiritual side that they can't conjure up sitting in a tour bus. All it takes is a courageous spirit and perseverance for those hills.

"With biking, you have a chance to know where the terrain changes, especially in Israel," observed Hiebert, the editor of a Mennonite publishing company. "One minute you're biking in the desert, and the next, you're biking next to lush, green fields."

Like Fournier, Hiebert and his 49 companions used their trip as an opportunity to raise money for a charity: the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society, which supports Nazareth Hospital. The bicyclists ranged in age from 18 to 64, and included ministers, musicians and a violin repairer.

The biking group started off near the Jewish settlement of Mishor Adumin, southeast of Jerusalem, and traveled to familiar Biblical destinations such as Capernaum and Nazareth. They passed through the desert, the West Bank town of Jericho by the Jordan River — near where Christ was baptized — and through the grassy hills around the Sea of Galilee. A tour company provided a guide and a support bus.

Comment

Babies: little miracles or big worries?

Two Under 35

Elizabeth Salomons
egs@smartt.com

Dirk Schouten
dbschouten@netscape.net

Dear Dirk,

A little miracle happened in my family this month. My brother and sister-in-law's first child, Madeleine, arrived safely. I'm told she's beautiful and healthy and I know she is already much loved.

I know because I already love her. I haven't met her yet — she lives in Edmonton so it might be a while before I do. But I can't imagine this world without her. When her proud dad sent everyone in the family a photo of her via e-mail, I in turn passed it on to everyone I know. My friends humored me — most of them have been aunts and uncles for years, and many are parents themselves already — but they gushed along with me and I, the much-too-proud aunt, still have perm-a-grin. Madeleine's a wee thing, but already she's made a whole crowd of people dizzy with pride.

This baby-thing isn't totally new to me. I did have the privilege of watching my other brother, 17 years my junior, develop from baby to man in a wink of an eye. I still remember the first time I met him. As I stared at him through the glass wall of the hospital nursery, I couldn't comprehend that he was my brother. He was just somebody's baby lying there, fast asleep.

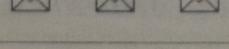
Some of my friends who are new parents don't realize that I was changing diapers long before they ever dreamed of having children. Watching a baby develop into a being with his own preferences, talents, and quirks has to be the most amazing experience on earth.

Last weekend my friend Robin came over with her 18-month-old daughter, Heather, and we went for a walk on the beach. Robin and I used to work together in Toronto for a publishing house. She is the most relaxed mother I've ever seen. When I asked her what her secret was, she said it was the same philosophy that made her an excellent editor: Expect chaos. If things go smoothly, it's a bonus. It seems to have worked, because Heather is one of the sweetest, happiest children I've known and Robin is doing a fine job of balancing work and family.

Whenever I see Heather, I always comment on how much she looks like her father, but this time I said to Robin that she didn't look quite so like him anymore. And Robin replied, "Yes, she's becoming her own person." Kids do that. And that's the miracle: that a new vibrant person can come from the love of two people.

I don't know who or what Madeleine will be. I suspect her parents are a little afraid, wondering whether she'll turn out all right, whether they'll teach her everything she needs to know. I won't dwell on that point; there are parents around who can do that much better than I. But I've been reciting Psalm 121 to myself this week, taking comfort in the faith that God will watch over Madeleine as she sleeps, and he will keep her going out and her coming in.

With thanksgiving,
Elizabeth



Dear Elizabeth,

I have to admit that the subject of babies makes me a bit uncomfortable. Please excuse the stereotype, but I think I'm guilty of having taken a very "traditional male" approach to these people; I keep my distance from babies and I don't get involved in the the ooing and aahing that goes on whenever one enters the room. I don't have children, I don't feel a deep need to have any, and when I do think about kids, it's in terms of how much I'll have to give up in order to support them. On top of all this, I have a great fear of being a lousy father. So not being a father at all is, to a degree, a personal relief.

Your friend Robin has a philosophy on parenting more of us should have. It's realistic and it will seldom let you down. If I ever have kids, I'll have to e-mail her to get the skinny.

But when it comes to the issue of child-raising, I think of something I read in a book by Andrew Kuyvenhoven. In a devotional about having kids he wrote something like the following: "It's good that most of us are young and somewhat reckless when we get married and have children, because if we knew how much work is involved beforehand, we might be too scared to go through with it." I'll bet many experienced Christian parents read that line and snickered, but I read it as someone who was no longer "young and reckless" and was becoming increasingly aware of his physical, emotional, and spiritual limitations. Kuyvenhoven wrote — and got away with — an ominous line. I'm still trying to come to terms with the implications of its content.

But maybe there's still hope for me. Babies soon turn into little kids, and what I like about kids are the things I value the most about people; they're honest and they say what's on their minds. They may be the only people on this planet who can appreciate total honesty. In all other relationships, your words and gestures are often negotiations of some sort. Around kids, they're taken at face value; if what you say to them is truthful, it'll be taken as such. Kids also appreciate it if you talk *to* them, not *at* them.

Around adults, half of communication is figuring out how you are to say what you're about to. If I have kids, I won't have trouble telling them that my bad mood had to do with Mommy and Daddy's lousy mutual funds or the fact that I can't lose the ten pounds I want to. They'd probably have good advice for me.

Maybe behind the tacky melody and lyrics, there's something to Elton John and the "circle of life" stuff he was singing about three years ago. You get old and start to slow down, but you can smile at night because you've cheated death by passing on something of yourself to someone new. And this little person grows into something you didn't expect it to and you spend 25 years trying to nail down the perfect way of dealing with it, even though your hundreds of failures prove that you can't. This child gives you a purpose and responsibility so pressing you can't stop to appreciate them for what they are.

Well, how about that? In a few paragraphs I've become as wistful as yourself, Elizabeth. Maybe that's good. Anyway, I'm gonna leave the Internet Cafe now, get on my scooter and head home, where I'll warm up a cup of hot chocolate, flop down on the couch and watch the last round of the Masters. Some friends of mine who have children have told me I don't know what I'm missing. Good! Because I don't want the pleasant life I'm now having spoiled. Maybe some day I'll really understand what they meant. Talk to you next month,

Dirk

Elizabeth Salomons is a freelance writer who lives in Vancouver. Dirk Schouten teaches literature and writing at Kosin University in South Korea.

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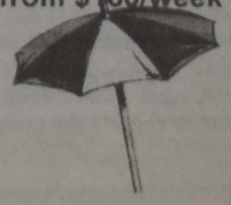

News Comment

Nose for News

Bert Hielema

I FIND POLITICS fascinating, especially American politics. It is so appealing to me because children seem to play a large role in the political scene south of the 49th parallel. A while ago it was *that woman*, a young intern with a flair for flashy underthings, now it is a six year old Moses, plucked miraculously out of the Gulf of Florida as the sole survivor of a group, which included his mother who had kidnapped him from his father in Cuba. For many Cuban-Americans in Miami, Elian Gonzalez has been an Elijah Godsent. Old women, with bones stiff from standing long vigils outside the house of Elian's disreputable relatives, tried to catch sight of this little boy to whom almost messianic powers have been attributed, murmuring among themselves that there must have been a higher purpose which had swept this child toward Florida's turbulent coast.

What grips me also in politics is that, even in much more secular Canada, religion (or perhaps better pseudo-religion) always seems to creep in nowadays. In the fiercely anti-Castro – thus anti-Communist – part of Miami where Elian found a home away from home, images of the Virgin Mary have been sighted both in his bedroom mirror and on the window of a local bank. Thousands of Cuban-Americans organized to form a vast torchlit human crucifix at a Miami crossroads in order to block any attempt to repatriate him.

Repatriate is the fitting word. His pater had legal custody of the child, and as the only surviving parent would be his natural guardian. But, somehow men — which fathers usually are — seem to be unfit to have custody of their children. Had the mother been the survivor and the father drowned, none of this hysteria would have happened. Moses-Elijah-Elian has unwittingly been successful where Monica failed: Al Gore, making a fool of himself in the process, broke political ranks with boss Bill, suggesting that a biased family court — chosen by an electorate loaded with Cuban exiles — should decide the boy's fate. He did this because Florida has a million Cuban Americans who play an important role when Florida's 25 votes are needed in the electoral college in November when it chooses the next president.

I imagine that when you read this, the boy will be safely in-CUBA-ted and Castro, who is probably the smartest dictator alive and even ever, will have reasons to crow.

BACK IN CANADA, somehow Joe Clark reminds me of Al Gore, although politically Al Gore is in better shape than poor old Joe, in whose mind might play that line: "Gone are my friends from the cotton fields away." I have sympathy for Clark. I might even vote for him, although I am afraid that it will be wasted. How will the leader of the Progressive Conservatives be able to battle the escalating Canadian Alliance?

With a crafty Ontarian running against the two Albertans, it is possible that Chretien will have a real opponent. A win for the new party would make me even more uneasy than a continuation of the Liberal regime. The man running — Tom Long — was the brains behind Michael Harris, who needed extra help in that department, because first year university proved too much for him. Long put Harris on the map, and I have an idea that this may happen again: once Long is in a position of power, Harris will jump to federal politics and try to become Prime Minister.

That's why Harris is an ABM proponent. No, not the Anti-Ballistic Missile program the US is pushing on Canada, but the other ABM movement = Anybody But Manning. Manning is just too clever, too honest, too incorruptible for the manipulators in Ontario. Frank Klees had a taste of this, and his wife — a man should always listen to his wife — told him to back off. Whatever happens will generate news, but not of the kind I try to comment on. I have serious misgivings about the 'religious' component of the Canadian Alliance. And I'll tell you why.

WHILE IN THE U.S., I bought a book entitled *The Battle for God*, in which Karen Armstrong, a former nun, traces the rise of fundamentalism in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, confining her research to the U.S., Israel, Iran and Egypt. She finds that fundamentalists are a product of the very culture they disapprove of: all "have a symbiotic relationship with modernity." She compares them to such movements as communism, fascism and nationalism, and correctly states that fundamentalism also is often an ideology of rage.

In both our countries it is expressed in tax-rage and rage against homosexuals and against more relaxed moral standards. She says that fundamentalists "have absorbed the pragmatic rationalism of modernity, and, under the guidance of their charismatic leaders [like Jerry Falwell and Pat Robinson] they refine these 'fundamentals' so as to create an ideology that provides the faithful with a plan of action."

Fundamentalists are activists and often lack compassionate tolerance. They remind me of Marthas rather than Marys. I prefer a loving embrace to forceful condemnation.

Armstrong recognizes that many people see modern society as "an emptiness, a void, that rendered life meaningless; many would crave certainty amidst the perplexities of modernity; some would project their fears onto imaginary enemies and dream of universal conspiracy."

For many who feel perplexed by forces they cannot control or understand, a retreat into fundamentalism offers hope and refuge. "But," she says, "fundamentalism is utopian, and accepts the proposition that the ends always justify the means." Armstrong suggests that the danger is not that fundamentalism will grow, but that modern, secular society will wither. What she fears is that, in the event of an environmental or major economic catastrophe, a Christian Fascist ideology could emerge.

SO THERE YOU HAVE some of my reasons-why I fear the North American approach to 'Christian' politics. The other danger is that the 'Christian' approach to the environment will be one of neglect. Fundamental Christians believe in Rapture. James Watt, a "charismatic Pentecostal" (like Stockwell Day and Manning in Canada) who served as Reagan's Secretary of the Interior— the Canadian equivalent of Minister of the Environment — opposed conservation because, as he explained to the nation, this world will pass away within a generation or two. If a new Republican administration emerges in the U.S. and also a Canadian Alliance government, then I see a real danger that nothing will be done to contain global warming.

The Republican dominated Congress has so far failed to ratify the oh-so-weak Global Warming Reduction Treaty, born amidst much pain in Kyoto 3 years ago. Just a few weeks ago there was a meeting, again in Japan, where environmental ministers from the world's leading nations again failed to set a deadline when to reduce emissions of CO_2 (carbon dioxide) and other greenhouse gases by an average of 5.2 per cent from 1990 levels. Why? The US auto and oil companies said the pact would hurt their businesses and the domestic economy by forcing them to spend more on equipment and technology. The ministers will try again at the sixth conference on Climate Change scheduled for November in The Hague.

In the meantime a climate specialist for the Canadian Forest Service's Research Centre in Edmonton warns that weather change will force the Northern Tree line to recede, and smoke from the rise in forest fires will linger longer over southern cities as 50 per cent more forest will burn in the next 50 years. Since 1970, each year fire damage has risen, and this increase will accelerate as the weather gets warmer, changing the face of the North. U.S. scientists project that the area to burn in the United States could grow by 78 per cent in this century.

This spring Canada's prairie and the U.S. Midwest are tinder dry with little or no snow cover. The summer of the year 2000 could well see another disastrous weather year. I hope that this will be the case, so that those who meet in November in the Netherlands will see fresh evidence of global warming and recommend to their governments that drastic action is needed. Already we see graphic evidence in the Third World: famine in Ethiopia because of drought. Famine in Mozambique because of too much rain. Famine is looming in Russia, and with droughts in China and the American grain-belt, the world could well see a global grain shortage, in spite of current historically low prices.

PARADOXES REMAIN everywhere. The latest *Worldwatch Paper* is entitled *Underfed and Overfed, The Global Epidemic of Malnutrition*. It is now estimated that as many people die from famine as from malnutrition. Americans consume nearly 200 grams, or 53 teaspoonfuls, of caloric sweeteners each day. The global population with adult-onset diabetes jumped nearly fivefold between 1985 and 1998, from 30 million to an estimated 143 million, due to the constant advertising and consumption of junk food. Everybody is complaining about the rising cost of healthcare, and smoking is partly being blamed. Now nutrition advocates argue that regulating advertising of junk foods is similar to curbing the promotion of cigarettes. Both industries target children in an effort to win lifelong customers. Both make products that kill in great numbers, and both drive up health care costs substantially.

The booklet recommends a tax on food, based on nutrient value per calorie. Fatty and sugary foods, low in nutrients and loaded with calories, would be taxed the most, while fruits and vegetables might escape taxation entirely.

Fat chance this has, with tax-cutting the main platform for Bush and Long and Manning and Day.

Bert Hielema, with his pit-greenhouse in operation, grows now most of his vegetable and flower plants. He lives in the rural part of the Municipality of Tweed.

Correction:

The past few issues of *Christian Courier* have had the incorrect issue number listed in page one. The correct issue numbers for the last five issues should have been: #2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, and 2636. *Christian Courier* regrets the error.

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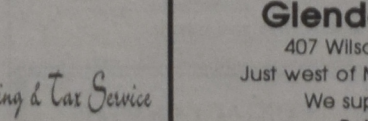

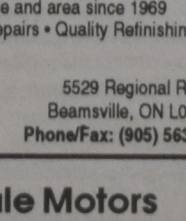

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Christian Courier is published on alternate Mondays. Copy deadline for each issue is 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, eight business days prior to publication.

RATES

All personal and family announcements: $16.00 per column inch (pci) + GST (columns are two inches wide). Display advertising re.: businesses and organizations: minimum $18.20 pci + GST, depending on design and frequency.

PHOTOS

There is a processing fee of $25 for the inclusion of a photograph with a personal or family announcement. Photo space is not charged pci, but we reserve the right to determine published photo size. Please note that we cannot use a faxed photo. We need either an original (which we will return) or a downloadable Internet image.

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OTHER INFORMATION

a) *Christian Courier* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format. And editing style.
b) Please provide us with clear copy. *Christian Courier* is not responsible for any errors due to hand written or phoned-in advertisements.

Anniversaries

Congratulations to John and Nellie Maan on their 60th wedding anniversary.

Maasland Brampton
the Neth. Ont.
1940 May 09 2000

"The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore." (Psalm 121:8)

The children, grandchildren and great grandchildren of

JOHN and NELLIE MAAN
(nee VAN BERKEL)

rejoice with Mom and Dad, Opa and Oma on their 60th wedding anniversary.

Congratulations Mom and Dad on this wonderful occasion. Thanks for all you have done for us and what you mean to us.

"The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord makes his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you: The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace." (Numbers 6:24-26)

Elizabeth Van Der Meulen — Newmarket
William & Anneke Van Dyke — Windsor
Adrian & Nellie Kamerman — Richmond Hill
Andrew & Margaret Dykstra — Midhurst
Brian & Maaike Maan — Newmarket
Frank & Joanne Bovenberg — Norval

Home address:
7900 McLaughlin Road S. Apt P-709,
Brampton ON L6Y 5A7

Adoption

"He has made everything beautiful in His time." (Ecc.3:11a)

With thankfulness to God, the giver of life, we joyfully announce the adoption of our two precious daughters,

Marlaina Ria Sophia
born December 15, 1995,
and
Gerri-Lynne Antonia Maria
born July 2, 1998.

Very proud and blessed parents are Paul & Irene Veldhuis. New sisters for a beaming Danielle.

Sharing in our joy are grandparents Mrs. Beverley Slofstra (7th and 8th grandchild) and Mr. John Veldhuis (24th and 25th grandchild) of Jarvis, Ont. Special "kleinkinderen" to Piet & Ria Kroneman of Nijmegen, the Netherlands. Rejoicing with us in heaven are Pake Allan Slofstra and Grandma Gerda Veldhuis.

Home address: 4357 Glancaster Rd., RR 3, Mount Hope ON L0R 1W0

Wedding

With great joy and thankfulness to our God, we, Adrian & Jean Van Geest of Blyth, Ont., wish to announce the wedding of our son

FREDERICK ARNOLD VAN GEEST
to
SUSAN MARIE VAN REES

daughter of Ron & Judy Van Rees of Des Moines, Iowa.

The wedding will take place, D.V., on May 20, 2000, at the Covenant Christian Reformed Church of Sioux Center, Iowa, with the groom's father and the bride's brother officiating.

Future address: 120 West Meadow Dr., Sioux Center, IA 51250 USA

Anniversaries

1955 Woodstock 2000

"Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." (1 John 4:11)

On Saturday, May 13, 2000, the Lord willing we will celebrate the 45th wedding anniversary of

JOHN and JENNIE DONKER
(nee BERGMAN)

Congratulations Dad and Mom, Opa and Oma. Thank you for your love and care. May God continue to bless and keep you.

With love,
Gerrie & Helen Donker — Dundas, Ont.
Jennie, Gina, Bethany, Ethan, David
Albert & Christine Renkema — Embro, Ont.
Karen, Angela, Nathan, Calvin, Leanne
Ralph & Shirley Renkema — Woodstock, Ont.
Brian, Craig, Timothy, Natalie, Matthew
Dean & Carolyn Axiotis — Woodstock
Nico
Shawn & Sharon Sandink — Woodstock, Ont.
Ryan, Tyler, Brandon

We invite you to share in this celebration on Saturday, May 13, 2000 from 2 - 4 p.m. at Maranatha Christian Reformed Church, Woodstock, Hwy 59 & 401.

Address: 817 Dufferin St., Woodstock ON N4S 1Y8

Woodstock, Ont. Woodstock, Ont.
May 12, 1950 May 12, 2000
Psalm 111:10

The family of
ARIE and JEAN DE HAAN
(nee VANDER KOOI)
are grateful to the Lord for granting them 50 years together.

We hope to celebrate this occasion on May 13, 2000, D.V., with an Open House at John Knox Christian School in Woodstock, Ont., from 2 - 4 p.m.

Best wishes only, please.

Their thankful children:
Willem & Elsie De Haan
Gerald & Joyce De Haan
Joanne & Ken Cook
Frieda & Dick Dekker
Harry & Donna De Haan
Albert De Haan
Jim & Jane De Haan
Marcia & Mark Van Drunen
and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Their home address is: 52 Kipling Cr., Woodstock ON N4S 8C2

Thanks

We want to express our thanks to all of you for what you did in remembering our family in the passing of our husband, father and grandfather, John E. Top.

We truly experienced the "body of Christ" and God's grace and strength through this difficult time.

Mrs. H. Top and family.

CONTACT US WITH YOUR AD AT
ccadpromo@aol.com

Anniversaries

Congratulations to John & Riemke Hiemstra.

Hoogeveen Mississauga
the Neth. Canada
1950 May 17 2000

GEERT and IMMIE BOOY
(nee DEKKER)

are grateful to the Lord for granting them 50 years together.

"Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him and He will act." (Psalm 37:5)

Congratulations to Mom and Dad on your anniversary!

With love from your children and grandchildren:
Hank Booy — Mississauga, Ont.
Gia & Adrian Gelok — Glen Williams, Ont.
Emma, Paul, Michelle
Rita & Glenn Carney — Frederickhouse, Ont.
Rebecca, Ian & Angel, Sarah, Lisa, Lydia, Seth, Ryan
John & Johanna Booy — Salt Spring Island, B.C.
Aaron, Daniel, Micah
Arlene & Jack VanRyn — Lisle, Ont.
Tim, Lea, David

We will celebrate the occasion with an Open House on May 20, 2000, D.V., from 2-4 p.m. at the Clarkson Christian Reformed Church, Mississauga, Ont.

Best wishes only, please.

Home address: 590 Byngmount Ave., Mississauga ON L0M 1M0

Obituaries

KARSTINA FOKKENS (DYKMAN)

Mom went home to be with her Lord on March 30, 2000, in her 81st year.

Beloved wife of the late Jan Fokkens (1987).

Dear mother of:
John & Beulah Fokkens — Port Colborne
Elly & Ed Vandermolen — Virgil
Chris & Bonnie Fokkens — Welland
Karen & Bill Winkelhorst — Brighton

Also survived by 13 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, her sister Lynn & Bill Baker of Grand Rapids, Mich. and three sisters in the Netherlands.

She was predeceased by her son Mike (1992). Funeral service was held on April 3, 2000 at Maranatha Christian Reformed Church, St. Catharines. Interment was at Pleasantview Memorial Gardens.

Schettens, the Neth. Telkwa, B.C.
1950 May 31 2000

JOHN and RIEMKE HIEMSTRA
(nee HUISMAN)

"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." (Gen.2:15)

We thank God for allowing us to celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of Dad and Mom (Pake & Beppe). May God continue to bless them as they continue to be a blessing to us.

George & Annette Dehaan — Fort Saskatchewan, Alta.
Michael & Rachelle, Christine & Tom, Carolyn & Darren, Richard, Jenilee
Thys & Ida Jaarsma — Telkwa, B.C.
Alvin, Rebecca, Nelina, Ivy, Chloe, Willard
John & Sylvia Mensonides — Tacoma, Wash.
Timothy, David, Daniel, Lisa
John & Johanna Bain — Cranbrook, B.C.
Tammy, John, Michael
Jim & Thelma Amsing — Bragg Creek, Alta.
Robert, David, Cheryl, Eli, John, Kimberly, Kerri Lynn, Joshua, Isaac, Mary
Steve & Jennifer Gehl — Kamloops, B.C.
Chad, Lindsay
Ed & AnnRita Aasen — Cranbrook, B.C.
Kristopher, Victoria
Ken & Geraldine Bouwman — Calgary, Alta.
Elora, Tyler, Larissa

Open House will be held at the Telkwa Christian Reformed Church, Telkwa, B.C., on May 20, 2000 from 1 - 5 p.m.

Home address:
Box 92, Telkwa BC V0J 2X0

1950 April 25 2000

"Commit your way to the Lord, trust in Him." (Psalm 87:5)

We are thankful to God for His blessings on 50 years of marriage for

HENK and JANE VAN GIESSEN

An Open House in their honor will be held on Saturday, May 13, 2000 from 2 - 4:30 p.m. at the First Christian Reformed Church of Chatham, Ont. (Fellowship Hall)

Home address: 178 Park Ave. East, Chatham ON N7M 3V6

Consider placing a Personal Ad. $16.00/column inch per insertion. One time set-up fee is $35.00 for a box number. GST is extra..

Classifieds

Obituaries

"I have engraved you on the palm of my hands." (Isaiah 49:16a)
Peacefully, surrounded by his loving family, after a brief illness, on Friday, April 7, 2000, the Lord called Home His servant

ARTHUR "ART" JOOSSE

of Ancaster, age 58 years.
Cherished husband of Joanne (nee Vanderwal) Joosse.
Beloved father of Carl of Edmonton, Alta. and Kristin of Ancaster, Ont.
Dearest grandpa of Brittany and Trent.
Loving son of Jannetje "Jans" Joosse of London, Ont. and the late Jan Joosse.
Dear brother of Tonia & William Vanderhorst of Strathroy, Lena & John Pasma of Aylmer and Carol & Bill Klyn-Hesselink of Chatham, Ont.
Friend and brother-in-law to Ken & Joan Vanderwal of Hamilton, Hilda Riddersma of Walkerton, Paul & Melody Vanderwal of Wayne, New Jersey and Rick & Diane Vanderwal of Belmont, Ont.
Loving uncle to many nieces and nephews, and cherished friend to all who knew him.
Art received his Bachelor's degree in Science and Education from the University of Western Ontario in London. From there he moved to Hamilton to begin his teaching career at Hamilton District Christian High School, and later at Westmount Secondary School, Hamilton, as both teacher and Head of Guidance.
His love for young people was evident through his involvement with various youth oriented activities at Immanuel Christian Reformed Church and in his everyday walk of life.
Art was President of Com-Car Owner-Operator's Association as well as Secretary-Treasurer of Truckers Co-op. He was very actively involved with the rights of all owner-operators and it was his hope that these efforts within the transportation industry will carry on.
Funeral service was held at Immanuel Christian Reformed Church in Hamilton on April 11, 2000, the Reverend John Zantingh officiating.
If desired, expressions of sympathy to Homestead or the After Dark Youth Group, c/o Immanuel CRC, 61 Mohawk Road West, Hamilton ON L9C 1V9, would be sincerely appreciated by the family. The family invite you to sign the Book of Visitation at **www.obituariestoday.com**
Correspondence address: 1009 Courtland Dr., Ancaster ON L9G 3L1

Zevenhuizen, Z.H. Brampton
the Neth. Ont.
June 29, 1912 - March 31, 2000
Psalm 23:4
On the morning of March 31,

LEENDERT VAN ROOYEN

was called home to be with his Lord and Savior and follow his beloved wife, the late Cornelia Dirkje Uyl (August 30, 1999).
Loving father of:
Bill & Marg Van Rooyen — Simcoe, Ont.
Hannie Corvers — Bowmanville, Ont.
Lovingly remembered by nine grandchildren and their spouses and 20 great-grandchildren.
Funeral service was held on April 3, 2000, in the Maranatha Christian Reformed Church, Bowmanville, Ont., Rev. Herman Praamsma officiated.

The Lord called unto Himself on Thursday, March 16, 2000,

ARIE JOHAN RUTGERS

in his 70th year.
Beloved husband of Gerda Rutgers (nee Hengeveld).
Loving father of:
Willy McGuinness
Arie & Mary Rutgers
JoAnn & Murray Spiece
Sylvia & Ed Rypstra
Geraldine & John Regeling
Sadly missed by his 19 grandchildren.
Predeceased by grandson Andrew.
Dearly missed by all his friends and family.
The funeral service was held at the Christian Reformed Church of Clarkson on March 20, 2000, with Rev. Pols officiating.
Correspondence address:
Mrs. Gerda Rutgers, 1338 Canvey Cres., Mississauga ON L5J 1S1
"The Eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." (Deut.33:27)

Mr. WIEGER SIKKEMA
March 1, 1911 - April 3, 2000
After 89 healthy years, on Monday, April 3, 2000, at his residence, Wieger has gone home to his Lord.
Beloved husband of the late Fetje Vandermeer.
Loving father to Janny & the late Edward Klompmaker — Campbellford
Bernard & Shirley Sikkema — Kingston
Arnold & Gina Sikkema — Stirling.
Dearly loved by his grandchildren: Francine & Uultsje, John & Debbie, Annette & Kirk, William & Marisa, Jennifer & Matthew; Bernie & Tammy, William & Vicky, Christine & Paul, Arnold & Nicola, Jeanette and Nathan; Tina-Marie, William and Daniel.
Also missed by his 14 great-grandchildren.
Wieger is also survived by his brother Jaap (Sietske) and sisters Jitske, Pietsje, Akke and by Fetje's brothers and sisters; Wietse (Jantje), Sieger (Griet), Tilly (Teun) of Canada, and Oeds, Kenau and Mina Vandermeer of the Netherlands.
Corresponding address: Mrs. E. Klompmaker, 968 Wingfield Road, R.R. #3 Campbellford ON K0L 1L0

PETER STERENBERG
"Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears." (Ps.34:3-4)
On April 10, 2000, our Lord took Peter to his heavenly house at the age of 76.
Peter was married for 46 years to his beloved wife Annie Sterenberg (Smit).
Beloved father of:
Bernard Sterenberg — Listowel
Henry Sterenberg — Jarvis
Ted & Chris Sterenberg — Beamsville
Elizabeth & Eric Mansell — New Jersey
Henrietta & David Eygenraam — Beamsville
Bill & Chantelle Sterenberg — St. Catharines
Matthew & Ginette Sterenberg — Welland
Anita Sterenberg — Belleville
Fondly remembered by 10 grandchildren.
Predeceased by his daughter Zwanatte, and three grandchildren, Susanne, Benjamin and William.

Terrace, B.C. Abbotsford, B.C.
November 9, 1957 - April 6, 2000
The Lord called home suddenly,

ARNOLD VERHULP

in his 43rd year.
Beloved husband of Anita and father of Rachel and Abby.
Also survived by parents:
Tony and Jean Verhulp
and brothers & sisters:
Shirley & Dave DeVos — Cambridge, Ont.
Luke, Mark, Aaron, Leah
Bryan & Christine Verhulp — Orleans, Ont.
Cheryl-lynn, Krystle, Nicole
Sandra & Barend Spek — Clifford, Ont.
Lisa, Jacob, Derk, Arnold, Kor
Wayne & Colleen Verhulp — Listowel, Ont.
John, Matthew, Heather
Bruce & Lily Verhulp — Fordwich, Ont.
Tiffany, Brianna
Parents-in-law:
Klaas & Hammie Holman.
Brothers and sisters-in-law:
Fred & Angie Holman — Wardsville, Ont.
Crystal, April, Kevin (with the Lord), Heather
Lois & Henry Griffioen — Port Perry, Ont.
Marcia, Cynthia, Corina, Kurtis, Janna
Walter & Jennifer Holman — Mt. Brydges, Ont.
Angela & Gregory Skrobar — London, Ont.
Grandmother: Maria VanderPloeg
A memorial service was held April 12, 2000 at Second Christian Reformed Church, Abbotsford, B.C. with Pastor Curtis Korver officiating.
"By the sea of Crystal saints in glory stand
Myriads in number drawn from every land
Robed in white apparel, washed in Jesus' blood
They now reign in heaven with the Lamb of God!"
Home address: Anita Verhulp, 35075 McKee Road, Abbotsford BC V2S 5T3

TERESA HUT
was taken home to be with her Lord on Wednesday, March 29, 2000, at Abbotsford, B.C., at the age of 84 years.
She was born in Kornhorn, the Netherlands, on November 26, 1915. Teresa will be lovingly remembered by her devoted husband of nearly 63 years, Heine.
She also leaves to mourn, her children: Ann Kingma (Andy), Henry Hut (Alida), Nel Croft (Gary), Wilma Faber (Ted), Sylvia Griffioen (Nol), Evelyn Floris (Simon).
Also one sister in the Netherlands.
Oma will be greatly missed by her 18 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.
She was predeceased by her grandson Howard Kingma (March 14, 1991).
A memorial service and celebration of her life was held on April 5, 2000 at the First Christian Reformed Church, Abbotsford, B.C

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Personal

A **retired gentleman,** 70+, living in the Hamilton/Brantford area of Ontario, is looking for a **housekeeper/companion.** Please send letters to **File #2706, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines ON L2W 1A1**

Teachers

CLAREMONT, Ont.:
Stouffville Christian School now accepting applications for teachers, **including Special Ed and Music.**
Fax resume to **905-640-7845** or mail to **RR 6, Claremont ON L1Y 1A3**

CLINTON, Ont.:
The **Clinton and District Christian School**, currently presenting Christian Education to 227 students in grades K-8, invites applications for a **75% Resource** teaching position. Interested applicants should submit a letter of application, resume, philosophy of education, transcripts and references A.S.A.P. (We recommend fax, e-mail or a combination of fax, e-mail and regular mail) to:
Clarence Bos, Principal
Clinton and District Christian School
PO Box 658, Clinton ON N0M 1L0
Phone: 519-482-7851
Fax: 519-482-7448
E-mail: cdcs@tcc.on.ca

JARVIS, Ont.:
Jarvis District Christian School has a definite **Grade 8 teacher** position available for 2000-2001. Strengths in the area of **Language Arts, History, Music** and/or **French** will be a definite asset. This position will involve some rotation into Grade 7. Interested persons should contact the principal for further information and/or send their letter of application and related information to:
Garry Glasbergen, Principal
Jarvis District Christian School
PO Box 520, Jarvis ON N0A 1J0
Phone: (school) 519-587-4444
(home) 905-765-7919
fax: 519-587-2985

Teachers

ORANGEVILLE, Ont.:
Orangeville Christian School invites applications for a **definite Primary/Junior** level vacancy for September 2000. (Strengths in **French, Music**, and/or **Special Ed.** would be assets). Please forward a resume with your statement of faith and philosophy of Christian Education to:
Orangeville Christian School,
PO Box 176 Orangeville ON
L9W 2Z6
Phone: 519-941-3381
Fax: 519-941-4391
E-mail: ocs@hurontario.net

LONDON, Ont.:
The Christian Academy of Western Ontario, High School Division, invites resumes for the following subject areas:
English, Computer Science, Math, Science, Music, Social Studies, Physical Education,
or any combination of the above.
Please send resumes to the attention of:
Mrs. Kerry Wilson, Principal, by May 10, 2000, at the Christian Academy of Western Ontario, 955 Gainsborough Road, London, ON N6G 5C9
The Christian Academy of Western Ontario is an Evangelical Christian School.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE, Alta.:
Rocky Christian School, an interdenominational CSI affiliated school of about 150 students, invites applications for a **full-time teacher** for the 2000/2001 school year.
Major teaching areas will be **junior high Language Arts and Phys.Ed.** Teaching ability in computer and/or music/band would be assets. Please submit resumes, including written references, Statement of Faith and Philosophy of Christian Education to:
Ben Bergen, Principal
Rocky Christian School
5204 54 Avenue
Rocky Mountain House AB
T0M 1T3
Phone: 403-845-3516
Fax: 403-845-4370

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Linda Jeronimus — Chairperson of the Youth Pastor Search Team of Brighton Fellowship CRC, Brighton, Ontario.
Address: Box 984, Brighton ON K0K 1H0
E-mail: youthpastor@joshua.org
or check our church web page at: **joshua.org/brightoncrc**
Deadline for application is May 31, 2000

Classifieds

Teachers

TORONTO, Ont.:
Toronto District Christian High School invites applicants for a **Chemistry** and **Bible** teacher. These positions begin August 1, 2000. Please send a resume complete with a list of references, a transcript of university courses taken and a statement of faith to:

Ren Siebenga, TDCH
377 Woodbridge Ave.,
Woodbridge ON L4L 2S8.
E-mail: rsiebeng@tdchristian.on.ca

WYOMING, Ont.:
John Knox Christian School has an opening for a teacher in the **Grades 6/7** class. Please send resume and philosophy of education to:

Mrs. Margaret Noorloos,
Education Committee,
RR 1, Wyoming, ON N0N 1T0
Phone: 519-542-8614
Fax: 519-542-8614

KITCHENER, Ont.:
Laurentian Hills Christian School is an interdenominational Christian school of 230 students, located in the beautiful Region of Waterloo. We invite applications for a **possible opening** at the **primary level.** If you wish to join our staff of 14 teachers, please send your resume and philosophy of education to:

Mr. Luke Janssen, Principal
Laurentian Hills Christian School
11 Laurentian Dr., Kitchener ON
N2E 1C1
Phone: 519-576-6700;
Fax: 519-576-2583

London District Christian Secondary School, LONDON, Ont.
Effective date of vacancy: Aug. 1, 2000
Due to an increase in enrolment, London District Christian Secondary School invites applications for a **Science/Math position**, a position involving a combination of courses, and a **part-time drama position (approximately 60%).** The ideal drama applicant will have experience in professional and/or amateur theatre. Candidates with future aspirations for a role in student services or administration (vice-principal) are encouraged to apply.
Please send a letter of application, a resume with a list of references, a transcript, and a statement of faith to:

Henry Kooy, Principal
London District Christian Secondary School
24 Braesyde Ave., London ON
N5W 1V3
Phone: 519-455-4360;
Fax: 519-455-4364
e-mail: office@ldcss.on.ca

OAKVILLE, Ont.:
Oakville Christian School requires a **primary or junior teacher** for September 2000. An **intermediate level position may also be open**. Computer skills would be an asset. Please send a letter of application, statement of faith and resume to the **Principal, Oakville Christian School 112 Third Line, Oakville ON L6L 3Z6. Phone calls are welcome at 905-825-1247 ext.223.**
We look forward to hearing from you.

Job Opportunities

LACOMBE, Alta.: Lacombe Christian School, approximately 383 students in K-9, located in central Alberta invites applications from qualified teachers for a **primary grade school teacher**. Applicants must qualify for Alberta teacher certification. Please send resume to:

Martin Folkerts
Lacombe Christian School
5206 58 Street
Lacombe AB T4L 1G9
phone: 403-782-6531
fax: 403-782-5760

Chatham Christian High School
a growing school community
with a beautiful new facility,
invites applications for a
Science Position
starting September 2000.
Please send resumes to:
John Van Pelt
Chatham Christian High School
475 Keil Drive South
Chatham, ON N7M 6L8
phone: 519-352-4980
fax: 519-352-4041

DORDT COLLEGE

FACULTY POSITION
Beginning August 2000

Theatre History and Introduction to the Arts; other possibilities include acting, directing, design, and stagecraft

THEATRE ARTS DEPARTMENT

Review of applications will continue until the position is filled. Qualifications include either a M.F.A. in Design or Ph.D. in History and Literature. When the degree is in one area, extensive exposure in the other is required. To apply, qualified persons committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send an e-mail/letter of inquiry and a curriculum vitae/resume to:

Dr. Rockne McCarthy
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dordt College
498 4th Avenue NE
Sioux Center, IA 51250-1697
Facsimile: 712-722-4496
E-mail: vpaa@dordt.edu
Web site: www.dordt.edu/offices/acadaff

Dordt College encourages the nominations and candidacies of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities.

THE KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

a four-year degree-granting Christian institution offering undergraduate university programs, has an opening for

DIRECTOR OF ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT

Reporting to the President, the Director will oversee a department responsible for recruitment of new students, development of institutional practices that promote student retention, and financial aid administration. The position includes policy direction, strategic planning, department administration, supervision of staff, and direct participation in the recruitment of students. The successful candidate will have demonstrated organizational and communication skills, hands-on experience and a proven record in university-level student recruitment and enrolment management, and will understand and endorse the College's Christian educational mission. A university degree is required for this position, and education with a strong marketing and/or communication component will be a significant asset.

Application deadline: May 5, 2000 or until filled

In accordance with Canadian immigration regulations, this advertisement is addressed first to Canadian citizens and permanent residents. The College encourages all qualified female and male candidates, including visible minorities, to apply.

Send applications, including complete resume to:
Dr. Henk Van Andel, President
The King's University College
9125 - 50 Street, Edmonton, AB T6B 2H3
phone: 780-465-8302 fax: 780-465-3534
e-mail: *hvanande@kingsu.ab.ca*
web: *www.KingsU.ab.ca*

CENTENNIAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
TERRACE, B. C.
TEACHING POSITIONS OPEN

Centennial Christian School invites applications from committed, Christian educators to fill openings for the 2000/2001 school year in the following areas:

Intermediate: Grade 7
High School: Grade 8
Humanities focus (Bible, English, Socials)
Grades 9-10 English, Socials
Senior High - English, Math, Physics, Computer

These positions may also involve teaching duties in other areas. Centennial Christian School is an inter-denominational school and presently offers Christian education to approximately 240 students in Kindergarten - Grade 10. **Grade 11 is being added in September 2000, and Grade 12 in September 2001.**This has created new openings as stated above. Please contact the principal or vice principal for further details and send letter of application, resume and other information to:

Centennial Christian School
Frank Voogd - Principal
Curtis Tuininga - Vice Principal
3608 Sparks Street
Terrace, B.C.
V8G 2V6
Phone: (250) 635-6173
Fax: (250) 635-9385

Vernon CRC, Vernon, BC is seeking a full-time

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES

to develop and direct youth ministry programs. This is a newly established position. We are looking for someone with a clear sense of calling, a passion for youth and a solid commitment to the Reformed perspective. A Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience is desired. A full time job description is available upon request.

Send inquiries and resumes to:
Search Committee
Vernon Christian Reformed Church
3605 12th Street
Vernon, BC V1T 3S7
Phone: 250-545-3926 Fax: 250-545-3924

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Reformed Faith Witness.

Classifieds

Miscellaneous

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fax: 011-31-511-424015
In Canada: call Mrs. Henny Huiskamp at 613-393-5256

Attention:

Campgrounds and Resort Areas

With summer 2000 not that far away, we plan to group your advertisements in *Christian Courier*'s **May 29, 2000** issue.
The advertising deadline is: **May 15, 2000.**

Many *Christian Courier* readers will soon be making vacation plans. Let us have your ad copy and instructions as soon as possible so that our readers will know who you are and where you are!

CC Staff

Job Opportunities

Social Service Work

Become a part of our team of committed professionals providing loving care for needy children.

Mutual Support Systems, a parent model network of rural group foster homes in the Niagara peninsula for children experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties is searching for the following as part of its recent expansion:

RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE WORKERS.
Related educational background is an asset. Competitive salary and benefits. This live-in position provides opportunities for out-of-province candidates.

Please contact Randy Klassen at:
Mutual Support Systems
P.O. Box 397
Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0
phone: 905-892-4332
e-mail: rklassen@mutualsupport.net
Visit us at:
http://www.mutualsupport.net

mutual SUPPORT

Summer Ministry & Employment Opportunity

Christian Horizons Conference Centre - Paisley, Ontario

Providing quality vacation services for teenagers and adults with developmental disabilities and a break for their families.

We are looking for committed Christians who have a willingness to serve and learn. Lots of energy and enthusiasm.

Role Duration: June 25 - September 1, 2000.
Training is provided June 21 - 25.

All staff receive free room and board and a small wage ($125-300/week) for their valued provision of time, energy and service to our guests.

Please Fax or Mail Resume to:
Claire Porter, Director
Christian Horizons Conference Centre
4442 Bruce Rd. 1, RR 2, Paisley, ON N0G 2N0
Phone: 519-353-5756 Fax: 519-353-5136
e-mail: chcc@bmts.com

Grace Christian Reformed Church

Situated on the level plains of Chatham-Kent in Beautiful Southwestern Ontario, is seeking a

Full-time
Director of Youth Ministries

Our congregation of 532 members requires an ordained or non-ordained Youth Leader who will give direction and leadership to our existing youth programs. Those who have a passion for this ministry and are committed to a Reformed perspective may direct their resume and/or inquiries to:

Jeff Dam
519-352-2940 ext. 108 (work)
519-354-5317 (home)
e-mail: jeffdam@ciaccess.com
48 Shawnee Trail
Chatham, ON N7M 6J7
Request a church profile by fax: 519-436-1558

Hamilton District Christian High School has two possible job opportunities that are worth your pursuit.

- 1 full time evening janitor
- 1 full time summer assistant janitor (May to September)

Take delight in maintaining a fabulous campus and beautiful building for staff and students as together we engage in learning to serve the Master together.

Applications will be considered until the positions have been filled.

Please respond in writing to: Mr. John Veldboom, Head Custodian and Plant Manager, 92 Glancaster Road, RR #1, Ancaster, Ontario L9G 3K9 Fax No.: 905-648-3139

Miscellaneous

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Showers available. *No pets please.*

Roel & Riet Bakema
Little Europe Resort, RR #3
Bracebridge, ON P1L 1X1
Phone: (705) 645-2738

REDEEMER CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

in Nepean (right next to Ottawa), Ontario is inviting applications in the Social Sciences/English and in the Mathematics/Computer areas for the 2000-01 academic year. If you are interested in teaching in a small, dynamic, visionary school in a beautiful building located in a very interesting city please send your letter of application and resume, including references to:

The Principal
Redeemer Christian High School
82 Colonnade Road North
Nepean, ON K2E 7L2
phone: 613-723-9262
e-mail: principal@rchs.on.ca

Teachers with the Ontario Teaching Certificate and the Ontario Christian School Teachers Certificate will be given preference in hiring. A living relationship with Jesus Christ, a love for your subject area and a passion for students is essential.

Classifieds

INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES

ICS seeks to recruit a Director of Development

The Institute for Christian Studies, an affiliate member of the Toronto School of Theology at the University of Toronto, has an opening for a leader. The Institute is poised to enter an exciting new phase. A new Director of Development, working with a competent staff, committed leadership and dedicated volunteers will play a vital role. The successful candidate will have experience in fundraising, be a good motivator and will be able to communicate the mission of Christian higher education at ICS with conviction.

The primary tasks for the new Director of Development will be to manage the annual fund program including direct marketing, planned giving, and major donor relations. In addition the candidate will provide leadership for a new major gifts campaign, now in the planning stages.
Salary is commensurate with experience. A generous benefits package is also available. For more information about the Institute for Christian Studies see our web site at www.icscanada.edu .

The position is available as soon as the suitable candidate is identified.

Qualified applicants should send a letter of application and a résumé by email, fax or mail to:

John Meiboom
Vice President of Administration
Institute for Christian Studies
229 College Street, Suite 200
Toronto, ON, M5T 1R4
email: jmeiboom@icscanada.edu
fax: 416-979-2332

INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES

ICS seeks to fill a vacancy in Philosophy effective July 1, 2001.

Applicants must have a Ph.D. in the field and must subscribe to the Christian basis of the Institute. Applicants should have teaching experience (preferably also at the graduate level) and a record of research and publications in ontology, epistemology or a related field. Responsibilities include graduate teaching and supervision, and a program of research and publishing. Further details are available on request. Base salary is approximately $43,000 + experience increments and benefits.

In accordance with Canadian immigration laws, this advertisement is directed to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

Qualified candidates should send a letter of application, CV and names of three references before June 30, 2000 to:

Dr. Harry Fernhout, President,
Institute for Christian Studies
229 College Street, Suite 200, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 1R4

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Apply on the web: www.kingsu.ab.ca

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Christian University Education
9125 - 50 Street, Edmonton, AB T6B 2H3 • (780)465-3500 • Fax (780)465-3534

TDCH

Toronto District Christian High School
377 Woodbridge Ave.
Woodbridge, ON L4L 2S8

NOTICE TO INTERESTED CONTRACTORS/SUBTRADES

Over the summer TDCH will be installing heating and air conditioning, new windows, electrical system and interior finishes. If you are interested in bidding on this contract, or any part thereof, please call Mr. W. Nonkes at 905-454-0229 (H) or 905-863-3018 (W). Please respond by May 5 for further information as to job specifications.

You are invited to celebrate
the 25th Anniversary of

Redeemer Christian High School

‹Community for Christian Learning›

May 13, 2000 at 2 p.m.
Bethel Pentecostal Church in Nepean
Speaker: Derek Maggs

Followed by a reception at the school:
82 Colonnade Road N., Nepean
For more information: 613-723-9262

Calendar of Events

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is $7.50 per line, or $1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

May 6	Spring Concert of sacred choral music. 100 voices combined. St. Thomas Ladies' Choir, "Gloria in Excelsis" with special guests, Sarnia Ladies' Choir "Jubilate" and Walkerton Ladies' Choir "Bel Canto." Freewill offering. Faith Baptist Church, 109 Chestnut St., **St. Thomas,** Ont. 7:30 p.m. (#)
May 6	40th Anniversary Calvin Memorial Chr. School, **St.Catharines,** Ont. For info call 905-937-6302.
May 7	Annual Benefit Concert for the Canadian Bible Society. Presented by St. Thomas District Male Choir "Crescendo" with guest tenor John DeJager. Knox Presbyterian Church, Hincks St., **St. Thomas,** Ont. 7:30 pm. Freewill offering. See display ad Apr. 17 issue. (#)
May 11	"Business by the Book" is a practical and highly interactive one-day business seminar designed by Christian Financial Concepts, presented by Fellowship of Companies for Christ and Christian Business Men's Committee, to take place May 11 at the Regal Constellation Hotel in Toronto. To register, call 1-888-459-2262.
May 13	Redeemer Christian High School's 25th Anniversary at Bethel Pentecostal Church, **Nepean,** Ont. 2 p.m. Speaker is Derek Maggs. For mor info, call 613-723-9262. (See display ad.) (#)
May 15	Public lecture by Redeemer Author/Professor Dr. John Boersema on Monday, May 15, 2000 at 7:30 p.m. in the Main Academic Building, Room 111. In his new book, Political-Economic Activity to the Honour of God, Dr. John Boersema seeks to provide a Christian approach to such questions. This evening is sponsored by Redeemer College and the Canadian Christian Business Federation. **Ancaster,** Ont.
May 20	Retirement Celebration Pastor Jack & Jennie Quartel, Clinton Chr. School, **Clinton,** Ont.; dinner 5:30 p.m. program 7:30 p.m. See display ad in Apr. 17 issue. (#)
May 27, 28	50th Anniversary **Brockville** CRC, Ont. For info call Kathy VandenBerg 613-348-3569, or Church office at 613-345-2050.
June 4	Festive Worship Service, Calvin CRC, **Dundas**, Ont. 9:30 a.m. - Celebration of 35th Anniversary of Rev. Hans Uittenbosch in the Ministry to Seafarers. (See display ad in May 1 issue.) (#)
June 17-18	50th Anniversary **Drayton** CRC, Ont. For info call 519-638-3902.
June 20-23	Dealing with Difficult People training event at UW, **Waterloo,** Ont. See Display ad Apr. 17 issue.(#)

You are invited to attend a

RETIREMENT OPEN HOUSE

for

Richard Strikwerda

who is retiring after 36 years of faithful service in teaching and administration.

Saturday, May 27, 2000, from 2-4 p.m. with a special program at 3 p.m.

Holland Marsh District Christian School
18955 Dufferin St., RR 2, Newmarket, ON L3Y 4V9

For more information, contact:
Henry Lise at 905-775-3701 or hmdcs@neptune.on.ca

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WESTLANDS MANNENKOOR

30 VOICE MALE CHOIR FROM THE NETHERLANDS

Tuesday, May 16, 2000 — 8:00 p.m.
River Run Centre
35 Woolwich St., Guelph
$15.00 per person
Tickets available at River Run Centre
box office 519-763-3000

Saturday, May 20, 2000 — 8:00 p.m.
Bramalea Baptist Church
9050 Dixie Rd. (at Queen St.), Brampton
$12.00 per person at the door
or call 905-648-3170
Tickets also available at Sonya's Store
in Holland Christian Homes

Tuesday, May 23, 2000 — 8:00 p.m.
Centennial Hall
550 Wellington St., London
$10.00 per person
Tickets are available at
the Centennial Hall box office.

Thursday, May 18, 2000 — 8:00 p.m.
Mountainview Christian Reformed Church
290 Main Street E., Grimsby
$10.00 per person
Tickets available at the Dutch Shop,
52 Main Street W., Grimsby

Monday, May 22, 2000 — 7:30 p.m.
Central Gospel Temple
240 Scott Street, St. Catharines
$10.00 per person
Tickets available at Ramaker's Imports,
579 Ontario St., St. Catharines
or call Martin Vuyk at 905-646-6586
Tickets will NOT be available at the door.

Wednesday, May 24, 2000 — 8:00 p.m.
Redeemer College
777 Garner Rd. E. (Hwy. 53), Ancaster
$12.00 per person
Tickets available from John VanderLaan
at 905-648-3170
or DUTCH TOKO — HAMILTON

For more information about the above concerts, call John VanderLaan at 905-648-3170.

clac

Christian Labour Association of Canada
Benefit Administration Office

Due to the continued growth of CLAC's Benefit Plans, the Administrators in the Grimsby Benefit Office are currently seeking a candidate for the following full-time position:

ASSISTANT BENEFIT PLAN ADMINISTRATOR

The successful candidate should be a highly motivated self-starter and possess a degree in business administration or the equivalent. In addition, this individual should have excellent communication skills, both verbal and written, strong interpersonal skills and be knowledgeable in the areas of finances as well as insurance and pension benefits. Knowledge of Lotus 1-2-3, WordPerfect and DataEase computer programs would be a definite asset. We offer a competitive salary and benefit package.

Applications should be received no later than June 9, 2000, and should be addressed to:

Christian Labour Association of Canada
Benefit Administration Office
89 South Service Rd., P.O. Box 219,
Grimsby, ON L3M 4G3
Attention: Peter Van Duyvenvoorde, Administrator
Tel: 905-945-1500
Fax: 905-945-7200
E-mail: pvanduyvenvoorde@clac.ca

News

Christian Expo 2000 offers publicity for Christian agencies

Alan Doerksen

TORONTO — Several prominent Christian musicians and entertainers will take part in Christian Expo 2000, a multimedia three-day event scheduled for May 4 to 6 at Exhibition Place in Toronto. The event will feature a wide variety of Christian entertainment, but is, primarily, an opportunity for Christian mission agencies, educational institutions, publishers and other companies to promote their products and services.

Tore Stautland, President of Christian Expo 2000, states on the event website: "We're excited that, through Christian Expo 2000, God is bringing together Christians from all kinds of backgrounds who are involved in all kinds of kingdom work to one place to share, learn and have fun with one another."

The expo will begin with a "bonus evening," on May 3, featuring Deborah Klassen, Wendy Mann and Judy Savoy in a benefit concert, in aid of the Toronto Food Drive.

Focus on youth, leaders, families

Each day of the expo has a different theme. May 4 will be Leaders Day, and will cater specifically to pastors and church leaders, with worship, special music, speakers and seminars. Brian Stiller, President of Tyndale College and Seminary, will be one of several speakers, and Juno Award-winning singer Steve Bell will perform in the evening.

May 5, Youth Day, will feature informative seminars, educational presentations and fun activities (including contests and prizes) for youth from across Ontario.

May 6 will be Family Day, and will feature an opportunity for kids to interact with characters from Veggie Tales. George Beverly Shea, well-known for his work with Billy Graham, will perform in the afternoon.

Christian Expo 2000 has 18 major sponsors, including relief agencies World Vision and Compassion Canada, and publisher Harper Collins Canada. Exhibitors from more than 150 Christian organizations will be on hand to explain about their work and products.

"We're excited about our roster of speakers and performers and look forward to what they will bring to the expo," David Raakman, director of public relations for the event, told the *Christian Herald* recently. "But we hope Christians will see the value of this event in terms of the hundreds of exhibitors who will be presenting new and exciting work that they are doing to advance the kingdom of God."

More information about the event is available on its website: **www.christianexpo.on.ca**

Alberta's independent schools get new director

CC Staff

EDMONTON — After a nationwide search, the Association of Independent Schools and Colleges in Alberta (AISCA) has announced its new executive director: Duane Plantinga. This summer, Plantinga will replace Gary Duthler, who left the position last spring.

CHOICES FOR CHILDREN

Duane Plantinga

Plantinga, who is currently the administrator of an independent school in Duncan, B.C., is no stranger to Alberta's independent schools, reports AISCA in its March newsletter, *Choices For Children*. He has served as principal of the Red Deer Christian School and taught in Edmonton and Calgary. Plantinga also has considerable experience in curriculum development.

"I am a strong advocate for the freedom of parents to choose educational settings and programs for their children that are compatible with their basic convictions and values," Plantinga told the AISCA board. "I believe a strong pro-active voice for parental choice is crucial."

Duthler, who has continued to work for AISCA as a consultant during the transition period, is pleased with the board's choice. "I believe that in Duane the association has a man of integrity who will act on principle and with tact, qualities that are crucial to dealing effectively with the government and other stakeholders," said Duthler. "I'm glad that I can leave the association in Duane's capable hands."

Plantinga and his wife, Sheryl, have four children, one in university, two in high school, and one married and living temporarily in Japan.

Burlington will celebrate 55th anniversary of Dutch liberation

CC Staff

BURLINGTON, Ont. – In early May, The Canada Netherlands Friendship Association (CNFA) will celebrate the Canada Netherlands Friendship Day on the 55th anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands by the Canadian Armed Forces.

Jack van der Laan, of the CFNA emphasizes in a letter, "The cost of peace should not be taken lightly, nor should the sacrifices made to achieve it ever be forgotten. Liberating the Netherlands in May 1945 was one of Canada's finest hours. The Canada Netherlands Friendship Association festivities in Burlington, Ontario, Canada, on May 5, 2000, will ensure that these sacrifices will never be forgotten."

Participants will include Don Allan and the Burlington Concert Band, Dutch Canadian troubadour Mr. Klaas Van Graft (you give him a line and he'll sing the song). Recent videos from the Netherlands (English language) as well as videos about the Canadian Veterans' 1995 journey to the Netherlands will be shown.

On May 6, celebrations continue with performances by pianist Gerry Tymstra and The Hamilton Wentworth Regional Police Choir.

Voortman

Color printing of this issue of *Christian Courier* is made possible by the generosity of Voortman Cookies Ltd. Thanks!

Holland

MARTINAIR HOLLAND 2000 SPECIAL

AMSTERDAM

Dates		Adult	Senior	Child
Apr	17, 20	559	539	499
Apr	24, 27	579	559	499
May	1-15	599	579	499
May	18-29	629	599	529
Jun	1-15	669	629	549
Jun	19-22	699	659	559
Jun	26-29	739	689	599
Jul	3-13	759	699	599
Jul	17-Aug 14	799	749	599
Aug	17-31	779	719	599
Sep	4-14	719	669	559
Sep	18-28	649	609	529
October		599	579	499

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News Digest

Scottish mountains for sale

ISLE OF SKYE, Scotland (AP) — The "far Cuillins," a Scottish mountain range which has belonged to a single clan for about 1,200 years, is up for sale. The Cuillin mountains span about 90 square km in Scotland's Isle of Skye.

Owner John MacLeod, the 29th chief of the MacLeod clan, is seeking offers of about $25 million to be used to refurbish nearby Dunvegan Castle and promote tourism and conservation. About 145,000 people visit 800-year-old Dunvegan Castle every year.

MacLeod has built the castle into a major tourist attraction since he inherited it in 1965. He says the decision to sell was difficult, but all the money will be reinvested into Skye.

The area for sale includes about 24 km of coastline, two salmon rivers, a sheep farm, a farmhouse, cottages and traditional farm buildings.

Watch out, Braveheart!

YORK, England — In England's walled city of York, it is still legal for citizens to use a bow and arrow "to shoot any Scotsman discovered out and about after sunset," reports the *Toronto Star*.

The bylaw, never repealed, came into force in the days of wars between England and Scotland's William Wallace, better known as "Braveheart."

Redneck churches

Do you know of any "redneck churches"? Here's a list taken from the "humor of the day" website (**www.humoroftheday.com**), to help you identify churches with a distinctive rural flavor:

- People grumble about Noah letting coyotes on the Ark.
- In the annual stewardship drive there is at least one pledge of "two calves."
- When it rains, everybody's smiling.
- A singing group is known as "The O.K. Chorale."
- There is no such thing as a "secret" sin.
- Finding and returning lost sheep is not just a parable.
- High notes on the organ set dogs in the parking lot to howling.
- People wonder when Jesus fed the 5,000 whether the two fish were bass or catfish.
- The final words, of the benediction are, "Y'all come on back now, ya hear!"